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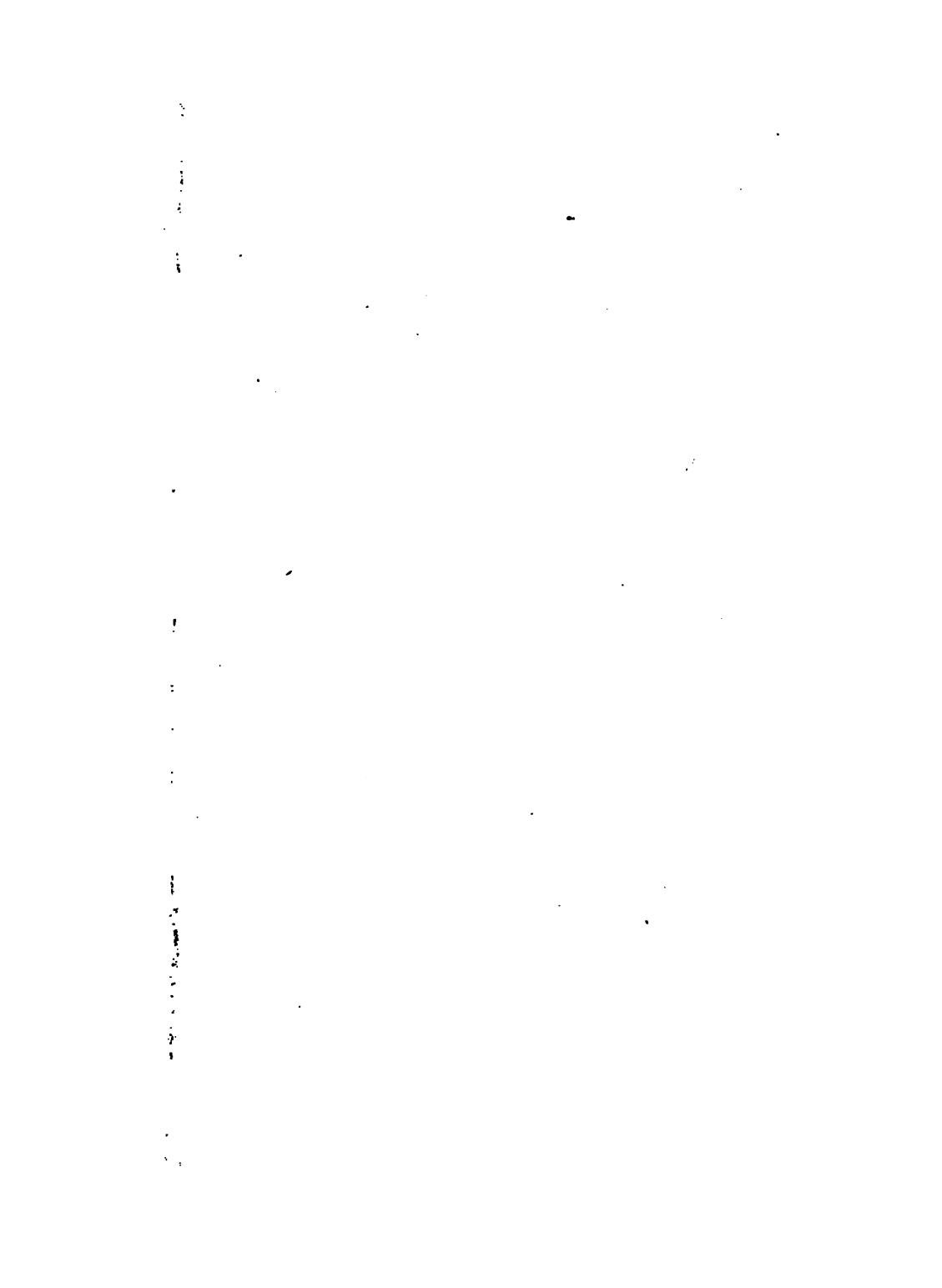
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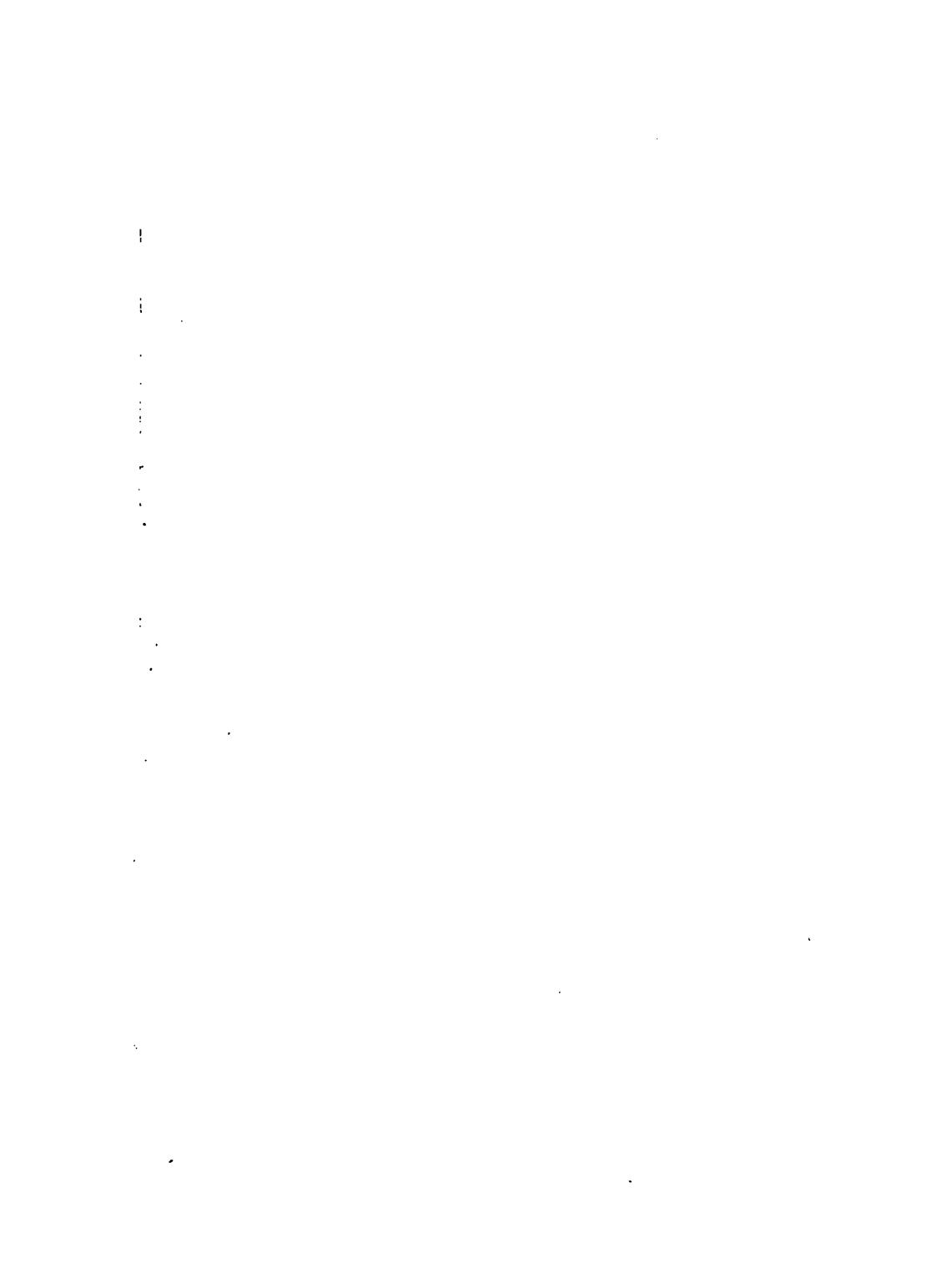
THE STORY OF MUSIC

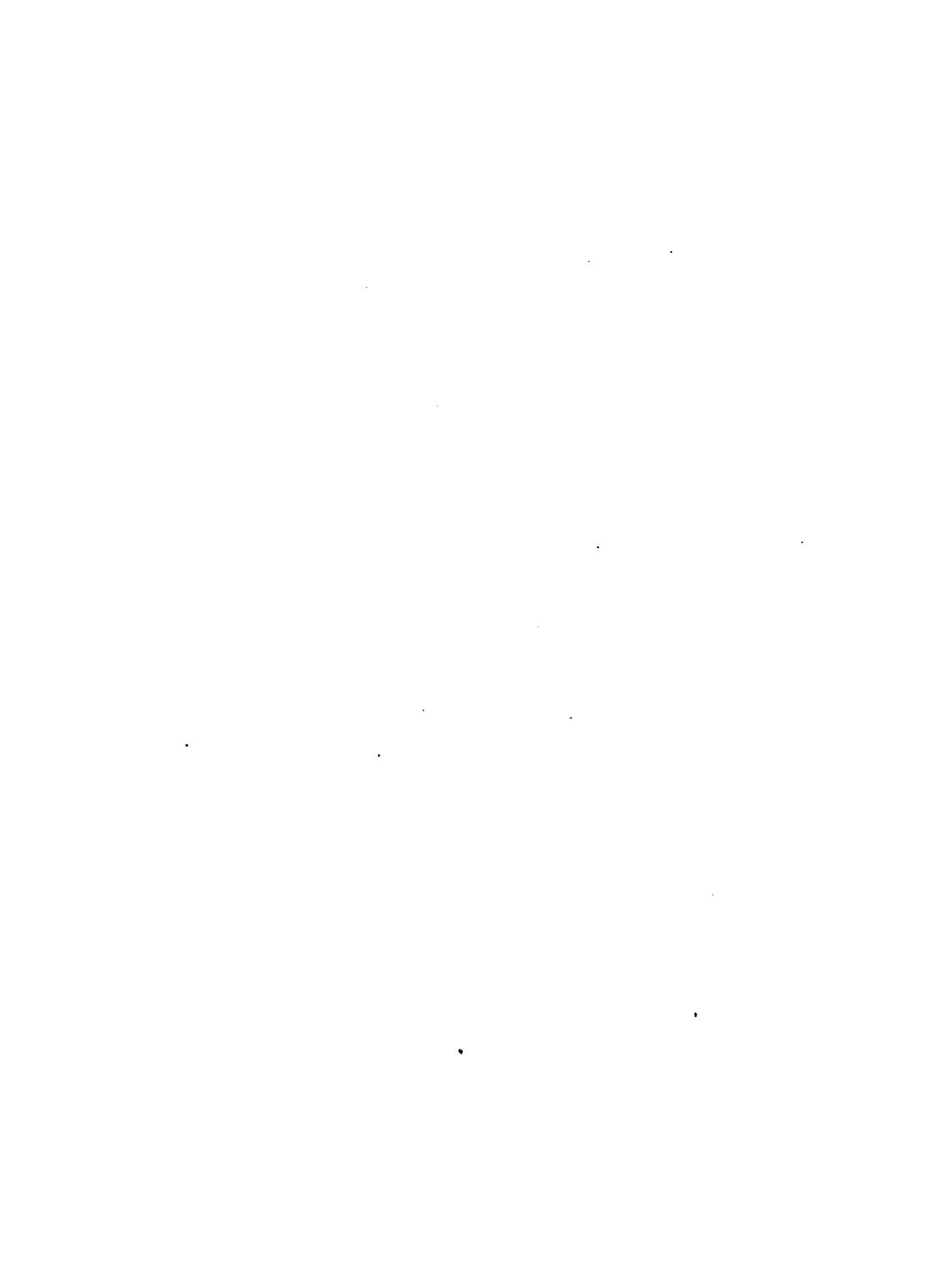
HENDERSON











THE STORY OF MUSIC

THE
STORY OF MUSIC

BY
W. J. HENDERSON

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TO

H. C. BUNNER

Warm hand, strong brain, and open heart
Of him who is, and hath been, friend,
Of all my work, from first to end,
Unceasingly I give thee part.

For thine hath been the honest tongue
To urge, to praise, to criticise—
Plain words made fair by kindly eyes—
If tales were told or songs were sung.

So clasping here this new-writ scroll,
As one who comes from sea to land,
I lean to meet thy outstretched hand,
And say, "Of this work take the whole."

W. J. H.

November, 1889.

PREFACE.

THE design of this little volume is to give a succinct account of the progressive steps in the development of modern music as an art. The author has therefore endeavored to avoid encumbering the book with details of the lives of composers. The standard works on the history of music are, almost without exception, constructed on the biographical plan. The author of this volume has aimed at separating the history of the art from that of the artists. In following this design he has avoided giving the story of the growth of the tone art in any one country at any particular period; but has sought to place before the reader a clear general outline of the advancement of musical creativity throughout Europe. In doing this he has flitted from Rome to Venice, and from Paris to Vienna, whenever it was necessary to show what was going on in all those places at the

same time. The plan of the book has enabled the writer to review the salient points of musical history with comprehensive brevity. This, he thinks, will be especially advantageous to the lover of music who has not the time, and perhaps not a sufficient knowledge of musical science, to read with profit the large and exhaustive standard histories. The chronological table is entirely new. It has been prepared with great care, and contains many important dates which could not be introduced into the body of the work without needlessly encumbering its pages.

The author believes that he has consulted the best interests of the reader by making free use, not only of the facts published by the standard historians and biographers but also of the opinions of those who are accepted authorities. He has, however, set forth his own opinions at some length, and the reader will readily distinguish them by the manner of their presentation. The chapter on "Wagner and the Opera of our Future" reaches forward into the region whose history is yet to be made, but it contains conclusions which the author hopes will appeal forcibly to all lovers, not only of truthful dramatic music, but of the divine art of song.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE	xi
CHAPTER I.	
MAKING THE ELEMENTS OF MUSIC	I
CHAPTER II.	
THE BIRTH OF ART-MELODY AND SECULAR MUSIC .	27
CHAPTER III.	
HÄNDEL AND BACH	46
CHAPTER IV.	
INSTRUMENTS AND INSTRUMENTAL FORMS	69
CHAPTER V.	
THE GREAT INSTRUMENTAL WRITERS	92

CHAPTER VI.

THE FIRST OPERATIC REFORMATION	PAGE 129
--	-------------

CHAPTER VII.

FROM MOZART TO VERDI	144
--------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER VIII.

WAGNER AND THE OPERA OF OUR FUTURE	172
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CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE.

A.D.

- 333. St. Ambrose born.
- 384. The Ambrosian chant arranged for the cathedral of Milan.
- 590. Accession of Pope Gregory, who arranged the Gregorian chant.
- 604. Death of Pope Gregory.
- 814. The Gregorian chant remained practically unchanged till this date, when the chant of Metz, Germany, began to be introduced in all Catholic churches at matins.
- 895-900. Beginning of modern harmony. Hucbald's "Organum."
- 1025 (about). Improvements in musical notation and introduction of solmization by Guido of Arezzo.
- 1100. Beginning of the earliest French school of contrapuntists. Jean Perotin introduces "imitation."
- 1200. Franco of Cologne regulates measure in music and formulates some of the fundamental laws of modern harmony.
- 1217. Walter Odington, an English disciple of the French school, writes a learned treatise on

A.D.

- music. [He is supposed by Naumann to have composed the famous part-song "Sumer is icumen in".]
1380. William Dufay, singer in the Papal chapel at Rome. He endeavors to imbue contrapuntal writing with euphonic beauty. Introduction of secular tunes in masses.
- 1425-1430 (between). John Okeghem, first master of the great Netherland school, born. Canon carried by him to its utmost perfection.
1440. Invention of printing.
1450. Josquin des Pres, pupil of Okeghem, and first genius in musical history born.
1453. Fall of Constantinople and flight of scholars to Italy.
1475. The Mastersingers flourished in Germany.
1480. Adrian Willaert, father of the madrigal, born. Introduction of double choruses in antiphonal form.
1502. Invention of movable metal types for printing music.
1514. Palestrina born.
1520. Orlando di Lasso, last of the Netherlands school, born.
1521. Death of Josquin des Pres.
1524. The first Lutheran hymn-book published.
1527. Willaert maestro in the Church of St. Marc, Venice.
1544. Cyprian di Rore's "Chromatic Madrigals" published.
1555. Palestrina's first masses published.
1562. Council of Trent.

A.D.

- 1563-1570. Lasso's celebrated penitential psalms composed.
1565. Palestrina's "Missa Papæ Marcelli" first sung.
1594. Deaths of Orlando di Lasso and Palestrina.
1594. Performance of Jacopo Peri's "Daphne," the first opera, at the Palazzo Corsi, Florence.
1598. Publication of Claudio Merulo's toccatas.
1600. Cavaliere's oratorio, "L'Anima è Corpo," produced.
1600. Production of Peri's "Eurydice" at the marriage of Henry IV. and Maria de Medici in Florence.
1607. Monteverde's "Orfeo" produced at Mantua.
1608. Production of Monteverde's "Arianna."
1627. Opera introduced in Germany by Schütz.
1633. Giovanni Battista Lulli, French opera composer, born.
1637. Opening in Venice of the Teatra San Cassiano, the first opera-house, with Manelli's "Andromeda."
1659. Alessandro Scarlatti, founder of the Neapolitan school, born.
1668. Cavalli, a follower of Monteverde in style, musical director at San Marco.
1672. Sebastiani's passion music published.
1683. Jean Philippe Rameau, French opera writer and musical theorist born. Domenico Scarlatti, instrumental melodist, born.
1685. Bach and Händel born.
1710. The pianoforte invented by Cristofori.
1713. Corelli died.
1714. Gluck born.

- | A.D. | |
|-------|--|
| 1714. | Emanuel Bach, sonata writer, born. |
| 1718. | Händel makes England his home. |
| 1722. | Rameau's "Traité d'Harmonie" and Bach's "Well-tempered Clavichord" published. |
| 1723. | Bach becomes cantor of the Thomas School at Leipsic. |
| 1724. | Bach's "St. John Passion" produced. |
| 1729. | Bach's "St. Matthew Passion" produced. |
| 1731. | Händel's first English oratorio, "Esther," produced by Bernard Gates, chapelmastor of St. James's. |
| 1732. | Joseph Haydn, father of the symphony, born. |
| 1737. | Rameau's "Génération Harmonique" published.
His masterpiece, the opera "Castor and Pollux," produced. |
| 1740. | Händel's "Israel in Egypt" and "Saul" produced. |
| 1742. | April 18th, at Dublin, "The Messiah" first performed. |
| 1749. | March 23, "The Messiah" produced in London. |
| 1750. | Death of Sebastian Bach. |
| 1756. | Wolfgang Amade Mozart born. |
| 1759. | Händel's death. |
| 1759. | Haydn's first symphony written. |
| 1760. | Cherubini born. |
| 1762. | Gluck's "Orfeo" produced. |
| 1770. | Beethoven born. Mozart's "Mithridate" produced. |
| 1781. | Gluck's "Iphigenie in Tauride" produced. |
| 1782. | Mozart's "Die Entführung" produced. |
| 1786. | Mozart's "Figaro" produced. Weber born. |

- A.D.
1787. Gluck died. Mozart's "Don Giovanni" produced.
1788. Mozart's last three symphonies, including the "Jupiter," written.
1791. Cherubini's "Lodoiska" produced.
1791. Meyerbeer born.
1791. Haydn visits London.
1791. Mozart's "Die Zauberflöte" produced. Death of Mozart.
1792. Rossini born.
1795. Beethoven's opus 1 published.
1797. Schubert born.
1798. Donizetti born.
1799. Haydn's "Creation" produced.
1802. Bellini born.
1803. Berlioz born.
1804. Beethoven's "Eroica" produced.
1805. Beethoven's "Fidelio" produced.
1809. Mendelssohn born. Chopin born.
1809. Haydn died.
1810. Schumann born.
1811. Liszt born.
1813. Rossini's "Tancred" produced.
1813. Richard Wagner born.
1813. Giuseppe Verdi born.
1818. Gounod born.
1821. Weber's "Freischütz" produced.
1821. Schubert's "Erl-King" first sung in public.
1823. Beethoven's "Missa Solemnis" composed.
1824. First performance of Beethoven's ninth symphony.
1826. Weber died.

A.D.	
1827.	Beethoven died.
1828.	Schubert died.
1829.	Rossini's "William Tell" produced.
1829.	Revival of Bach's "St. Matthew Passion" by Mendelssohn.
1831.	Bellini's "La Sonnambula" produced.
1831.	Meyerbeer's "Robert le Diable" produced.
1835.	First performance of Donizetti's "Lucia." Bellini's death.
1836.	First performance of Mendelssohn's "St. Paul" at Düsseldorf.
1836.	First performance of Meyerbeer's "Les Huguenots."
1842.	Verdi's "Nabuco" produced.
1842.	Wagner's "Rienzi" produced.
1844.	Wagner's "Flying Dutchman" produced.
1845.	Wagner's "Tannhäuser" produced.
1846.	Mendelssohn's "Elijah" produced at the Birmingham Festival.
1846.	Berlioz's "Damnation of Faust" produced.
1847.	Mendelssohn died.
1848.	Donizetti's death.
1849.	Death of Chopin.
1849.	Schumann's "Faust" produced.
1850.	Wagner's "Lohengrin" produced.
1851.	Verdi's "Rigoletto" produced.
1856.	Schumann died.
1859.	Gounod's "Faust" produced.
1864.	Meyerbeer's death.
1865.	Wagner's "Tristan und Isolde" produced.
1868.	Rossini died.
1868.	Wagner's "Die Meistersinger" produced.

A.D.

- 1869. Berlioz died.
- 1872. Verdi's "Aida" produced.
- 1876. Wagner's "Der Ring des Nibelungen" produced at Baireuth.
- 1882. Wagner's "Parsifal" produced.
- 1883. Wagner died.
- 1887. Verdi's "Otello" produced.

THE STORY OF MUSIC.

CHAPTER I.

MAKING THE ELEMENTS OF MUSIC.

If I am to tell the story of the music of to-day, from its birth, in a brief space, I must necessarily omit much that would be interesting. In order to cover the ground without overstepping the limits of such space, I have decided to tell the history of music, not that of musicians. The object of these chapters will be to show how our music has grown from the swaddling-clothes that cherished yet confined it in the middle ages, to the splendid raiment of to-day. I shall endeavor to show, in general, along what lines and by what processes our noble art has developed from a strictly scientific character to one personal and romantic ; how, instead of being mechanically constructed ac-

cording to arbitrary rules, it is now the embodiment of the utmost freedom of expression and the voice of the loftiest soul-poetry in the world. In a word, I shall endeavor to show how our music, having been originally a shell-fish, with its restrictive skeleton on the outside and no soul within, has been developed by the inevitable laws of evolution, through natural selection and the survival of the fittest, into something human, even divine, with the strong, logical skeleton of its science inside, the fair flesh of its God-given beauty outside, and the whole, like man himself, animated by a celestial, eternal spirit.

These chapters, then, will contain nothing more about the lives of the great composers than is absolutely necessary in treating the subject. There are numerous excellent biographies of the great musicians, and all students of music should read the lives of the masters. All that I shall strive to do will be to show what each of the bright lights in our history contributed to the advancement of his art. We shall first see how the earliest writers were occupied in creating the formal materials of music, how later ones developed them till technicality went to extremes. Then we shall meet with a reaction, which resulted in the first introduction of ro-

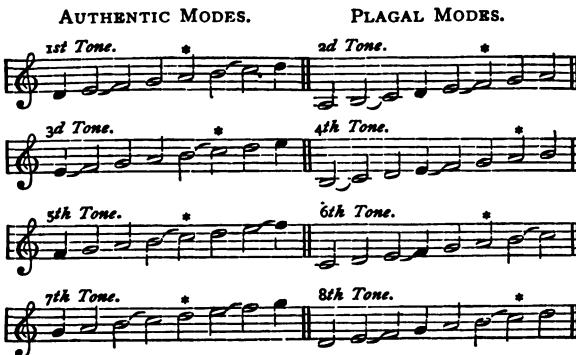
mance into music, and opened the gate of that well-trodden path which led to Beethoven and thence to Richard Wagner.

It would be unprofitable to enter into any consideration of ancient music, because we have no definite or satisfactory information concerning it. We know that when the daughters of Israel hung their harps on the willows, and sat down by the waters of Babylon and wept, they possessed music ; for David, the author of the sublimest hymns that were ever sung, again and again speaks of praising God with the voice and with instruments. We know, too, that the Greeks had music, and sufficient has been discovered in regard to it to show us that modern ears would not relish it. The first infant wail of the voice of our own musical art that has come down to us was the Ambrosian chant, “the ecclesiastical mode of saying and singing divine service, set in order by St. Ambrose for the cathedral of Milan, about A.D. 384.” We know almost nothing about Ambrose’s system. He is generally credited with having chosen for the use of the Church four diatonic scales arranged after the manner of the Greeks, and to have set the service with these in some manner. The reader is to picture for himself, if he can, a music like the earth before the creation, without form

and void. The only notation known at this period was a kind of musical shorthand, indicating the intervals through which the voice should rise or fall. There was no difference in the length of the notes, no bars, no phrases, no time, no rhythm—nothing but an indefinite sort of sing-song. Yet the Church service, chanted in this way, must have been more effective than when read; for St. Augustine, in his “Confessions,” says that his first hearing of it moved him to tears. Here is a specimen of it:



Pope Gregory, who was the head of the Christian Church from 590 to 604 A.D., made the next progress in musical art. The Gregorian chant became a master-power in ecclesiastical music, and its influence has continued to be felt in no small measure until to-day. In order to construct his music Gregory added to the four scales of Ambrose, which were called the authentic modes, four more, known as the plagal. You are not to suppose that he invented these scales. They existed before, but he introduced their use into the scientific music of the time. Here, then, are the eight Gregorian scales:



These scales are designated with cumbersome Greek names, with which the reader need not burden his mind. In the course of time four more scales were added. Of these we need only note the fact that one of them was our scale of C natural, which they were bound to find sooner or later, in their process of scale-making. If these scales were set before a beginner in music at the present day, without further instruction, he would treat them as simple progressions in the scale of C. But they were nothing of the sort. The black notes indicate the tonics, and the asterisks are placed over the dominants; though the latter term did not have the same meaning then as it has now. It indicated the

* Dominant. The tonics are indicated by crotchets.

tone on which the principal recitation was to be made. A chant, then, was composed on the notes of the scale to which it belonged. It consisted of an intonation, followed by a recitation on the dominant ; a mediation, ending with the middle of each verse ; another recitation on the dominant and a termination finishing the verse. Here is an example :



Three Latin names were applied to the Gregorian chant: *Cantus planus*, meaning plain chant and referring to its even movement; *cantus choralis*, signifying that it was sung by a chorus; and *cantus firmus*, or fixed chant, indicating that special melodies were affixed to each liturgical text. Bear in mind this term, *cantus firmus*, for you will find it playing an important part in the progress of our art. We can now dismiss the Gregorian chant with a paragraph of Emil Naumann's: "The chant, as now arranged by Gregory, differed from the Ambrosian in that it was no longer recited or governed by the length or quantity of the syllables or metre of the language, but consisted of continuous melodies, the length of each tone differing

but slightly in value. It possessed something of that peculiarly impressive character belonging to the Church chorale, so adequately fitted for its divine purpose, partaking of that seriousness and majestic dignity which makes the chorale a fitting offering to Him who is far above time, space, and the accidents of every-day life."*

* It is not improbable that Gregory's musical labors were only a part of his plan to give the Roman Church supreme temporal power. History shows us that while he left nothing undone to establish the influence of the Church, he also endeavored to spare nothing that could militate against it. He built up an imposing and elaborate Church ritual, designed to overwhelm the impressionable minds of an ignorant people. According to Draper, in his *Intellectual Development of Europe*, "His oft-expressed belief that the end of the world was at hand was perpetually contradicted by his acts, which were ceaselessly directed to the foundation of a future papal empire. Under him was sanctified that mythologic Christianity destined to become the religion of Europe for many subsequent centuries, and which adopted the adoration of the Virgin by images and pictures; the efficacy of the remains of martyrs and relics; stupendous miracles wrought at the shrines of saints; the perpetual intervention of angels and devils in sublunary affairs; the truth of legends far surpassing in romantic improbability the stories of Greek mythology; the localization of heaven a few miles above the air, and of hell in the bowels of the earth, with its portal in the crater of Lipari." This same pontiff, according to Draper, hated all human learning, "and insisting on the maxim that 'Ignorance is the mother of devotion,' he expelled from Rome all mathematical studies, and burned the Palatine Library founded by Augustus Cæsar. It was valuable for the many rare manuscripts it contained. He forbade the study of the classics, mutilated statues, and destroyed temples. He hated the very relics of classical genius; pursued with vin-

And thus we have learned something about the foundation of what we to-day know as melody. This alone, however, does not make what we call music. Whence, then, came harmony? The Church ritual was sung by a chorus in unison, and the first, or one of the first, to introduce part-singing into the Church, where the only musical science of the day was preserved, was Hucbald, a Benedictine monk of St. Armand, in Flanders, who was born about 840 and died about 930. His musical activity dated, therefore, three centuries later than Gregory's. What had music been doing all this time that harmony should suddenly appear? Let me hasten to answer this question by stating that no one knows. All that has been or can be advanced upon this subject, in the absence of historical data, is mere conjecture. Dr. Parry, in his admirable article on "Harmony," in Grove's "*Dictionary of Music*," expresses the opinion that harmony originated in the use of

dictive fanaticism the writings of Livy, against whom he was specially excited." It is not difficult to perceive that a mind capable of devising such a policy would see the availability of the solemn and mysterious chant as a means of heightening the effect of the Church liturgy and strengthening its hold on the popular mind. We must admit, therefore, that Gregory's musical labors were inspired by no devotion to art, though they led to beneficent results which their projector could never have conceived.

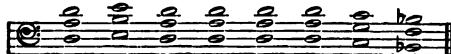
instruments of percussion, which, sustaining a single note under a melody, led to the use of the drone bass. Langhans advances the very plausible theory that harmony originated in the use of the oldest bowed instruments, which had a flat bridge, thereby compelling the bow to touch more than one string. He thinks that all three strings were set in vibration at once, the two lower ones sustaining the tonic and the fifth, and the highest giving out the melody. He believes his supposition is borne out by the fact that Hucbald called his system *ars organandi*, the art of "organating," and adds that in early mediæval times "organum" meant any species of musical instrument. My own belief is that harmony is the child of the organ, for the word "organum" had been applied to that particular instrument eight centuries before Hucbald's time.*

The Flanders monk, however, was the father of systematic harmony, for he left the first treatise on the subject. He gave to the world the first rules for the simultaneous sounding of dif-

* Marcus Vitruvius Pollio, a Roman writer on architecture, who flourished B.C. 27, used the word as meaning a military engine, and previous to this time it signified an implement or instrument, not necessarily musical, of any kind. Suetonius, the historian, however, uses the word as the name of the water-organ, a musical instrument of the time of Nero, who died 68 A.D.

ferent tones. His principal interval was the fifth, and to this he added the fourth, and his harmony consisted in making two voices move in parallel fourths or fifths. In order to bring in a third part he doubled the lower voice in the upper octave, and to construct a quartet he doubled the fourths or fifths. Here are some samples of his harmony :

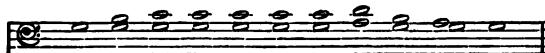
THREE PARTS.



FOUR PARTS.

Musical notation for four parts. It consists of four staves. The top staff has a soprano C-clef, the second staff has an alto F-clef, the third staff has a tenor A-clef, and the bottom staff has a bass G-clef. All staves have common time. The music consists of a series of eighth-note chords. Below the second staff, the lyrics "in o - pe - ri - bus su - is." are written under the notes.

In addition to these methods Hucbald had what he called "oblique" organum, and in this were the germs of a more facile style of composition. It was always two-voiced, the lower part remaining almost invariably on one note, while the other intoned the melody. Here is a specimen of it.



Tu pa - tris sem- pi - ter-nus es fi - li - us.

MAKING THE ELEMENTS OF MUSIC. 11

And now we have the whole system of harmony as known in the early part of the tenth century. But once the foundation-stones were laid the great edifice of modern music arose with marvellous rapidity and strength. There was little or no science in this primitive system, but to its disciples, as Rockstro pertinently notes, we owe a deep debt of gratitude, “for without the materials accumulated by their ingenuity and patience later composers could have done nothing. They first discovered the harmonic combinations, which have been claimed as common property by all succeeding schools. The misfortune was that with the discovery their efforts ceased. Of symmetrical arrangement, based upon the lines of a preconceived design, they had no idea. Their highest aspirations extended no farther than the enrichment of a given melody with such harmonies as they were able to improvise at a moment’s notice.” Mr. Rockstro’s estimate of the work of the followers of Hucbald is a just one, and here let us examine one of the causes, perhaps the chief cause, of the lack of science in their unsystematic labors. This was the absence of measure, which did not take its place in music till the close of the twelfth century.

The method of writing down music employed

in the days of our art's infancy is called the Neume notation. It consisted simply of a kind of shorthand marking over the words of the text, and was as old, possibly, as the days of David's psalms, for it is still to be found in the Hebrew ritual. Here is a specimen of it from a manuscript of 814 A.D.:

A sōliš ḥortu"

This has been translated as follows:



As time wore on these signs were made more intelligible by the use of a colored line. If this line was red, F was the key-note; if it was yellow, the key was C. In the eleventh century both these lines were used, thus clearly marking the range of a fifth from F to C. The notes then, as now, were designated by letters of the alphabet. Guido of Arezzo, who was born in 995 and died in 1050, added two more lines to the staff, and also restored the use of the spaces, which had been exclusively employed in a rough sort of notation practised by Hucbald. Guido made one great advance in musical art, and I pause here to mention this achievement. It was

the origination of solmization by means of the syllables *ut, re, mi, fa, sol, la*. The syllable *do* was substituted for *ut* at a later date. These syllables were the initial sounds of the lines of a hymn, each of which began with a tone a degree higher than the previous one, giving in succession the scale C, D, E, F, G, A. By means of this Guido was able to teach his pupils sight reading.

Hucbald having introduced what may be called a system of harmony, and Guido having added some improvements to it, as well as having taught choristers how to sing, the next step in the progress of our art was a natural result. The more accomplished singers began to add ornaments to their melodies in the twelfth century, and it dawned upon the professors of music that if one part was to sing two notes to the other's one there ought to be some sort of law which would compel the tenors and basses to finish a line at the same time. This practice of ornamenting the upper part was known as "descant," and it became a perfect mania. Various unscientific attempts were made to bring order out of the ensuing chaos, but no success was achieved before the labors of Franco of Cologne, about 1200 A.D. He wrote a famous treatise called "Musica et Ars Cantus Men-

surabilis," in which he not only set forth a system of measured music, but laid down laws for part-writing which are almost identical with those of modern harmony. He introduced into scientific music triple time, which he called "perfect." He recognized as a consonance the third, which had hitherto been held in disfavor by the Church. He classified the major and minor seventh, the second, and the augmented fourth, as the only true dissonances. And above all, he strongly advocated, in part-writing, the use of a contrary movement of the different parts, which is the most vigorous kind of counterpoint. He also put in order the few blind attempts that had been made, previous to his time, to make notes representing sounds of different lengths. He adopted four characters, viz., the *Longa*, | ; the *Brevis*, | ; the *Duplex longa*, | | ; and the *Semibrevis*, ♫ .

Previous to the time of Franco the seed sown by Hucbald had been growing in France. Writers on musical history usually pass from Franco to the great masters of the Netherlands, ignoring the early French composers; but Naumann's masterly review of the researches of Coussemaker ought to settle for all time the claims of France to precedence in the development of counter-

point.* Coussemaker's labors show that double counterpoint was born four hundred years earlier than the generally accepted time, and he introduces to us five hundred composers and about one thousand two hundred compositions, "all," as Naumann says, "bearing more or less evidence of the contrapuntist's skill." The period during which this great French school flourished extended from 1100 to 1370 A.D. It is impossible in a condensed history of music to enter into an extended account of this school. I shall therefore enumerate its achievements as briefly as possible. Its earliest masters produced compositions in four distinct parts, among them being the first motets and rondeaus; and from the writings of Walter Odington, an English disciple of the school, we learn that the latter could be written without text, and must therefore have been used at times as purely instrumental com-

* A manuscript in the library of the Medical Faculty at Montpellier was the principal source of Coussemaker's information. Naumann says: "He extracted with rare discrimination the essential parts of the old manuscript, publishing them, together with able and learned commentaries, in Paris in the year 1865. The issue of this work, entitled 'L'Art Harmonique aux xii^e et xiii^e Siècles,' was limited to three hundred copies only, as it was intended for the exclusive use of scientific bodies. Of the three hundred and forty specimens which were taken from the Montpellier manuscript, fifty-one are said to belong to the twelfth and thirteenth centuries."

positions. Perotin, who flourished between 1100 and 1140 A.D., is the first composer known to have employed the important musical device called "imitation." Here is the passage:



Imitation, no musical scholar of to-day need be told, is the foundation of the canon and the fugue. Double counterpoint was not long behind imitation, for Jean de Garlande, one of Perotin's immediate successors, in his treatise on music, says that it was known before his time. He describes it as the repetition of the same phrase by different voices at different times, and gives this example :



Here you see the germ of the canon, a musical form which has been cultivated by composers down to the present day. After Jean de Garlande the chief composers of the old French

school were Franco of Paris, and Franco of Cologne, who, in spite of Coussemaker's researches, are generally confounded; Jerome of Moravia, Philippe de Vitry, Jean de Muris, and William of Machant. All of these continued to develop imitation, canon, and double counterpoint, and I need only mention especially that Jean de Muris recorded the fact that in his day three tempi were in use—lively, moderate, and slow—corresponding to our allegro, andante, and adagio. I repeat, also, the name of Walter Odington, an Englishman, who was a disciple of the French school, and who wrote a learned treatise on music in 1217 A.D. To him Naumann attributes the composition of the noted part-song, "Sumer is icumen in," which is a very ingenious canon for six voices. It was first brought prominently into notice by Sir John Hawkins in his history of music.

The teachings of the Paris theorists spread into the provinces of Hennegau and Flanders, and there grew up a school called by Naumann the Gallo-Belgic school. The most prominent of its composers was Dufay, who lived between the middle of the fourteenth century and the early part of the fifteenth. He introduced into his masses the melodies of popular songs instead of the *cantus firmus* sanctioned by the Church; he

abolished the use of parallel fifths, which had been common ; he adopted the open-note style of notation ; and he began the practice of interrupted canonic part-writing, in which the imitation does not continue throughout a composition but appears only at occasional effective places. Above all, Dufay was the first writer who attempted to lift contrapuntal writing above mere mechanical construction, and to imbue it with euphonic beauty.

Rockstro, in his article on Schools of Music in Grove's Dictionary, describes the music of Dufay's time thus : "At this period, representing the infancy of art, the subject, or canto fermo, was almost invariably placed in the tenor, and sung in long-sustained notes, while two or more supplementary voices accompanied it with an elaborate counterpoint, written like the canto fermo itself in one or other of the ancient ecclesiastical modes, and consisting of fugal passages, points of imitation, or even canons, all suggested by the primary idea, and all working together for a common end."

Dufay's introduction of secular airs in his masses establishes the fact that the folk-song, the free unscientific composition of the people, which had existed from the earliest times, had now reached a point of excellence which com-

elled its recognition by the learned in music. It would be interesting, if opportunity permitted, to trace the growth of this influential form of composition. The troubadours in France and the minnesingers in Germany cultivated this species of music, and wrote canzonets, serenades, roundlays, pastorals, and minnelieder, many of which have been preserved and are extremely interesting. Weber, you will remember, makes Adolar sing a minnelied in the first act of "Euryanthe," and Wagner has given us in "Tannhäuser" a magnificent picture, drawn from the life, of a contest of knightly singers at Wartburg. King Thibaut, of Navarre (1201-1253 A.D.), Adam de la Halle (1240-1286 A.D.), Spervogel, and Prinz Witlav were distinguished writers of popular music in the middle ages. The introduction of the folk-song into art-music was an important event, for it breathed into the nostrils of science the breath of life and awakened the first expressions of emotion not connected with religious feeling, whence music developed into the supreme language of the human heart.

Thus we have followed the progress of our art through what Mr. Hullah calls its first period of development, from 384 to the beginning of the fifteenth century, when it began to re-

semble what we now know as music. The second period, that of the great contrapuntists of the Netherlands, extended from 1400 to 1600. Between the old Paris theorists and these Netherlands masters Dufay was the connecting link. It may at first seem strange to find the Dutch leading the world in musical progress, but we must remember that at this period they led the world also in painting and in liberal institutions. I cannot refrain from quoting a brilliant passage from Motley's noble "History of the Dutch Republic." He says: "Thus fifteen ages have passed away; and in the place of a horde of savages, living amongst swamps and thickets, swarm three millions of people, the most industrious, the most prosperous, perhaps the most intelligent, under the sun. Their cattle, grazing on the bottom of the sea, are the finest in Europe; their agricultural products more exchangeable than if nature had made their land to overflow with wine and oil. Their navigators are the boldest, their mercantile marine the most powerful, their merchants the most enterprising in the world. Holland and Flanders, peopled by one race, vie with each other in the pursuits of civilization. The Flemish skill in mechanical and fine arts is unrivalled. Belgian musicians delight and in-

struct other nations. Belgian pencils have for a century caused the canvas to glow with colors and combinations never before seen." Among such a people as this, then, our art took its next grand stride; and it is not to be wondered at that with this practical and industrious nation the mere mechanics of music went wellnigh to perfection. The general tendency of European thought at this time also had its bearing on the tone art. Scholasticism was in full sway, and such philosophers as Albertus Magnus, John Duns Scotus, and William of Ockam were engaged in wondrous metaphysical hair-splitting, endeavoring to reduce Aristotelianism to a Christian basis by the application of the most rigorous logic. This spirit of scholasticism entered music, and contrapuntal science by too much learning was made mad. The true soul of our art was struggling for expression, but like Walter in "Die Meistersinger," it was fettered by the iron rules of the time, and science, like Sixtus Beckmesser, confounded it with the record of its sins. But, still like Walter, its time of triumph was to come, and when once the soul of music had entered the body of science the real life of our art began.

The first master of the Netherlands school was John Okeghem, born between 1425 and

1430. He was probably a pupil of Binchois, who had studied under Dufay. Okeghem elaborated the canon to the utmost perfection of ingenuity. His skill in the construction of this kind of music led to its adoption by many other writers, and for a considerable period nothing else could get a hearing. Okeghem's most celebrated pupil was Josquin des Pres, who was the shining light of the Netherlands school, and the first true genius in the history of music. Okeghem's instruction enabled his pupils to overcome all the technical difficulties of their art, and Josquin, born about 1450, and a singer in the Pope's chapel at Rome in 1484, was a complete master of the formal material of music as known in his day. The number of his compositions was remarkably great, and his work was distinguished by the fact that he always strove to make contrapuntal design subservient to true musical beauty. He added nothing to musical science, but he made far better use of it than any of his predecessors; and he achieved during his life the widest fame ever won by a musician up to that time. His works were sung throughout Europe. This was due no more to their excellence than to the fact that in Josquin's time Ottaviano dei Petrucci, of Fossombrone, invented movable metal types for

music-printing, thus doing away with the rough wood-cut notes employed after the invention of printing in 1440. Josquin's printed compositions consist of nineteen masses, fifty secular pieces, and more than one hundred and fifty motets. Most of the masses introduced as cantus firmus have some such air as "The Armed Man," or the "Red Noses," then popular European songs.

"L'Homme Armé," which was so frequently used by mediæval Church composers, is given with modern harmony by Naumann, as follows:

Andante.

Naumann notes the resemblance between this air and the refrain of Osmin's song in "Die Entführung aus dem Serail," and conjectures that it may have suggested Mozart's melody.

Following Josquin was Adrian Willaert, born

at Bruges in 1480. He was the father of the madrigal, which was a natural outgrowth of the use of secular songs as cantus firmus. Willaert also introduced the double chorus in antiphonal form. He went to Venice and became there the head of a school of composers who followed the Netherlands style. Other prominent Netherlands masters were Jean Mouton, Gombert, Claude Goudimel, Clemens, and Cyprian di Rore. The last great light of this school was Orlando di Lasso, born at Mons, in the province of Hennegau in 1520. Di Lasso was an admirable writer in the lyric and epic styles of his time, and probably would have distinguished himself in opera had that form of art been known. With him the art of writing sacred music disappeared from the Low Countries, while in Italy it grew to its greatest glory.

I have chosen to sketch thus briefly the rise and fall of this school in order that I might discuss its work apart from the lives of its masters.

First of all, then, the masters of the Flemish school carried counterpoint to its farthest limits. They invented the "cancriza," a backward movement of the cantus firmus; the inversion form of the canon, in which there was a counter-movement of all the intervals of the melody; canons by augmentation and by diminution, all

of which forms were cultivated by Bach. But they went farther and made forms which were not affected by the learned Sebastian. They had a repetition of the cantus firmus beginning with the second note and ending with the first ; another, in which all the rests were omitted ; a third, in which the tenor in the repetition was half retrograde and half progressive ; and a fourth, in which the repetition omitted all the shortest notes. These canons were written down, together with Latin phrases or sentences which darkly hinted at the manner in which they were to be worked out ; and it was the delight of musicians to invent or to decipher these riddle canons. Nothing but musical mathematics could be produced by such methods ;* but one good result came of them. They improved musical science and gave the composers of that period a great command over the resources of their art. In technical skill, no master has ever surpassed Okeghem ; and all that he knew he taught Josquin, who made it the outlet for his real musical genius. Josquin wished to please the ear, and his earnest search after euphonic effect gave music a decided impulse in the right direction.

* Mozart sometimes practised at writing these forms, and Jahn notes that they served to embody little musical ideas, just as the triolet serves to embody a neat poetic conceit.

One evidence of this genius is seen in the fact that he was the first to intentionally employ the dissonance for the expression of passion and emotion. Later masters of the school found themselves unable to use all Okeghem's artificial forms with such happy results as Josquin achieved, and thus we find a less florid style and simpler harmonies toward the close of the existence of the Netherlands school. Other causes, which will presently appear, also contributed to this.

What I wish especially to call your attention to now is this: We have arrived at the culmination of the development of early counterpoint. We have traced the progress of music from 384 to 1500, and found its masters occupied during those eleven centuries in manufacturing the materials of their art. The Netherlands school fashioned those materials into every conceivable shape and added to them. When no more could be done in the invention of tone-combinations, the mission of the Netherlanders was at an end. The time for encrusting popular airs with contrapuntal riches was gone. The epoch of musical mechanics was completed, and the world was ready for the birth of that child of the wedded folk-song and counterpoint—art-melody. How that birth came about we are now to see.

CHAPTER II.

THE BIRTH OF ART-MELODY AND SECULAR MUSIC.

On the 29th of May, 1453, Constantine, last of the Roman emperors, lay dead in a breach through which Mohammed II. and his victorious Turks poured into Constantinople, capital of Rome's eastern empire. The scholars of the Greek and Latin churches fled into Italy and there sowed the seed of that renewed interest in classical antiquity which blossomed in the new birth of art and learning known as the renaissance. Music was the last of the arts to be touched by this influence. Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael, and Michael Angelo were pouring forth their inspired works before Josquin's death, and long after it the musical life of the world was devoted to contrapuntal labor. The influence of the renaissance on music was to find issue in a form never dreamed of by the fathers of the Church. But before this could come

about it was required that music should be moved by a great popular impulse, and before this impulse could be given it was necessary that the people should lay hold on the art-music of the day. The reformation of Martin Luther accomplished this, for in it arose the practice of congregational singing. He made use of secular airs, when they were sufficiently noble in themselves, without the words, and wrote or had written, many new hymn tunes. The fathers of the Catholic Church were not long in perceiving the tremendous influence over the people of this kind of worship. The religious compositions of the Netherlands masters lost favor at once. The fact that in adopting a secular song as cantus firmus the old composers had compelled the tenor to sing the secular words while the other parts used the words of the mass, suddenly struck the fathers as ridiculous. The excessive floridity of the style, which made the words of the mass unintelligible, was also found to be faulty. In short, the whole system of Church music was at once discovered to be wrong, and it was decided that something must be done. The Council of Trent in 1562 laid the axe to the root of the evil. The question was raised whether polyphonic music should not be banished from the Church ; and it would

undoubtedly have been banished had it not been for the noble achievement of the immortal father of modern Church music, the first of the great sons of Italy, who now takes up the march of musical progress.

Giovanni Pierluigi Sante, born at Palestrina in 1514, and called now by the name of his birthplace, was the saviour of scientific Church music. When the Council of Trent entered upon its labors Palestrina had already written his beautiful "Improperia" (Reproaches), which brought him into notice in religious circles. To him the committee appointed by Pope Pius IV. turned for aid, and he produced three masses, of which the third, dedicated to Palestrina's former patron, Pope Marcellus II., carried the authorities of the Church by storm and decided once for all how true Church music ought to be written. Palestrina immediately became the chief composer for the Catholic Church in Rome, and his style superseded that of his predecessors and became the model for all who succeeded him. He continued his labors throughout a long life, marked by a singular simplicity of mind, a rigorous integrity of action, and a pious devotion to the sacred cause of Church music. His extant works are very numerous, and are well worth the trouble of close study.

Critics have agreed to disagree on the subject of Palestrina's music. One says that its most striking characteristic is its artless simplicity, while another tells us that it is absolutely Gothic in its complexity. It seems to me that the technical construction of Palestrina's masses has less to do with their individuality than their æsthetic quality. The Netherlanders had been gradually advancing toward expression in music. Josquin had made a grand stride in this direction. Palestrina put genuine soul into his work. He was just as thorough a master of counterpoint and made just as elaborate use of it as any of his immediate predecessors ; but instead of ostentatiously displaying his methods and laying bare the resources of his art, as they had done, he sought to conceal his mechanism and leave on the mind of the hearer only the impression of beauty and exaltation. Rockstro says : "It was not the beauty of its construction, but the presence of the soul within it, that made his music immortal. He was as much a master of contrivance as the most accomplished of his predecessors ; but while they loved their clever devices for their own sake, he only cared for them in so far as they served as means for the attainment of something better. And though his one great object in introducing this

new feature as the basis of his school was the regeneration of Church music, it was impossible that his work should rest there. In establishing the principle that art could only be rightly used as the handmaid of nature, he not only provided that the mass and the motet should be devotional, but also that the chanson and the madrigal should be sad or playful, in accordance with the sentiment of the verses to which they were adopted. His reform, therefore, though first exemplified in the most perfect of masses, extended afterward to every branch of art."

To me this seems to be a calm and just estimate of the character and importance of Palestrina's labors. Let me before dismissing this subject point out one or two prominent traits of his style. Its chief feature, as before intimated, was its art of concealing art, an achievement which had never before been considered desirable, and hence had never been attempted. Secondly, as Rockstro notes, Palestrina's polyphonic writing has never been surpassed in its evenness. He never writes worse for one part than another. Each is equally important, and never descends to the menial office of filling up the harmony. To quote again from Rockstro, who has written admirably of this composer: "The harmony is produced by the interweaving

of the separate subjects ; and when, astonished by the unexpected effect of some strangely beautiful chord, we stop to examine its structure, we invariably find it to be no more than the natural consequence of some little point of imitation, or the working out of some melodious response, which fell into the delicious combination of its own accord. In no other master is this peculiarity so strikingly noticeable. It is no uncommon thing for a great composer to delight us with a lovely point of repose. The later Flemish composers do this continually. But they always put the chord into its place on purpose ; while Palestrina's loveliest harmonies come of themselves, while he is quietly fitting his subjects together, without, so far as the most careful criticism can ascertain, a thought beyond the melodic involutions of his vocal phrases. How far the harmonies form a preconceived element in those involutions is a question too deep for consideration here."

Palestrina was the harvest and the autumn of true vocal polyphony. With him it died. But the seed which he had sown took root and blossomed in loftier music in other lands. The great principle that science should be made subservient to soul permeated music and revolutionized it. Contemporaneously with Pal-

estrina, Willaert's disciples in Venice were developing the formal resources of music, and Cyprian di Rore, whom I have heretofore mentioned, and Zarlino, had accomplished much important work. Di Rore made a special study of chromatics, publishing in 1544 his "Chromatic Madrigals," in which the common use of the semitone prepared the way for the freedom of music from the old ecclesiastical modes. Zarlino took up the now necessary subject of temperament, the object of which is to divide the octave into a number of intervals of such a nature that the notes which separate them shall be suitable in number and arrangement for the purpose of practical harmony. One of Zarlino's most important achievements was the reduction of the third by a small interval, so that it became a true consonance, thus opening the gate for the entrance into harmony of the triad, its true basis. These material labors were preparing the way for the facile flow of the melody of the future. Up to this time, owing to the absence of solo-singing and the reign of polyphony, melody had not attained its normal mastery of music.

I have said that we were about to see the birth of art-melody. I have told you of the influx of classical scholars into Italy and how their

influence failed to take hold on church music. I shall now show you how these scholars were the moving power which led to the construction of that magnificent edifice—modern secular music.

Choruses had been introduced in dramatic performances as far back as 1350, but they were always written in four parts, in the ecclesiastical style. In 1597 A.D., in a comic play by Orazzi Becchi, the text written for a single personage of the drama was sung in five-part choruses written in the madrigal style. Lovers of art began to see that such music was unsuited to drama. The feeling culminated at the marriage of Bianca Capello to Francesco I., the Duke of Tuscany. A dramatic performance was given, with choruses by Merullo and Andrea Gabrielli, written in polyphonic style and the canon form. The musical rejoicings consequently sounded somewhat like funeral dirges. Everyone was disgusted, and the Florentine noble, Count Bardi, together with his friends, all art enthusiasts—for it was in Florence that the renaissance flourished best—resolved that there ought to be a better style of dramatic music. And at this point the exiled scholars from Constantinople made their influence felt in music. They talked of the Greek drama and its intonation or recitation in music, and Bardi and his friends at once

set about reconstructing the true musical declamation of the Greeks. Fortunately for the progress of art, in the Camerata, or club, which met at Count Bardi's house, there were not more than three professional musicians. Had there been a majority of these gentlemen, the little circle never would have dared to set at naught all the rules and traditions of centuries. But there were more Walters than Beckmessers in the assembly ; the laws of polyphony and the maxims of musical sages were set at naught ; and the little body of enthusiasts proceeded independently on the principle formulated by Hector Berlioz: "That whatever produces a good effect is good, and that whatever produces a bad one is bad ; and that the authority of a hundred old men, even if they were each one hundred and twenty years old, cannot make ugly that which is beautiful, nor lovely that which is hideous."

Giovanni Bardi was a moving spirit in the festivities of the court. There he introduced his friends and they gave private dramatic performances. Ottavio Rinuccini, poet ; Pietro Strozzi, poet and composer ; Emilio del Cavaliere, ducal superintendent of fine arts ; Vincenzo Galilei, composer, litterateur, lutist, mathematician, and father of the great astronomer Galileo ; Girol-

amo Mei, musical theorist ; Giulio Caccini, singer and composer, and Jacopo Peri, immortal as the composer of the first opera, were the "choice and master spirits" of the club. Their open disapproval of the wedding music before mentioned and subsequent condemnation of the contrapuntal style led them into a war of ink, paper, and logic with our friend Zarlino, of the Venetian school of contrapuntists. The Florentines did not content themselves with mere words ; they proceeded to support their theories by facts and to manufacture those facts themselves. Galilei wrote a dramatic scene for one voice and one instrument. The subject was "Ugolino" from Dante's "Purgatorio;" his own was the voice ; the viola, the instrument. The work was applauded by his friends. He wrote more and called them monodies. And these were the first vocal solos on record in the history of art-music. Previously when a solo was wanted some one of the parts of a polyphonic chorus was picked out and sung by one voice. Galilei wrote the first dramatic solo, without which opera is, of course, impossible. Caccini imitated Galilei and produced sonnets and canzonets for one voice. Then Emilio del Cavaliere wrote a pastoral play and set the entire text to music, which had never been done be-

fore. He made extensive use of the madrigal, and his work bore little resemblance to its successors. Next the poet Rinuccini wrote "Daphne," Jacopo Peri composed music for it, and it was performed with great success at the house of one Corsi in 1594. This stands upon the pages of musical history as the first opera. Peri immediately began another, and in 1600, at the marriage of Henry IV., of France, with Maria de Medici in Florence, he produced his "Eurydice," singing *Orpheus* himself. "Daphne" made Peri known through Italy; "Eurydice" made him celebrated throughout Europe.

Peri wrote a preface to the printed edition of his "Eurydice." In it he says that his study of the drama of the ancients convinced him that they had a semi-musical kind of intonation. He began to study the manner of speaking in use about him, and endeavored to imitate it in his music. "Soft and gentle speech he interpreted by half-spoken, half-sung tones on a sustained instrumental bass; feelings of a deeper emotional kind by a melody with greater intervals and a lively tempo, the accompanying instrumental harmonies changing more frequently. Sometimes he employed dissonances." This, then, was dramatic recitative and Peri invented it. Here is an example of his work.

Or di soa-ve plet-tro ar-ma-to e-d'aurea ce-tra con lagri-

mo-so me-tro Canoro -mante im-pe-tra ch'ilciel ri-veggae

vi-va La sos-pi-ra-ta Di-va.

This style of recitative was called *stile rappresentativo* or *stile parlante*. The new drama was known as *Dramma per musica*, *Melodrama*, *Tragedia per musica*, or *Tragicomedia*. It was not till 1650 that it was spoken of as *Opera in musica*, and afterward this was abridged to *opera*. And thus from a search after classical form arose a new species of art, totally different from the antique drama of Greece in structure, in feeling, and in its relations to life. This new musical drama was not an outgrowth of the public heart, but a production of the learned

few, and it became the toy of the noble and the rich. It was produced in elaborate style in the salons of princes and its subject-matter was drawn from the ancient mythology. Hence it was beyond both the means and the comprehension of the common people. Not till many years afterward did the opera become a recreation for the common people, and its lofty purposes were then forgotten in the desire to cater to the public taste.

But this is anticipating. The new form of court amusement speedily took its way to Venice, where it was somewhat modified by the influence of the emotional church style of Willaert, Cyprian di Rore, and Zarlino. Andrea Gabrielli and his nephew Giovanni were their successors, but they did little toward the development of the new form of art. In 1568, however, the first genius of opera was born at Cremona. This was Claudio Monteverde, whose chief musical activity was during his directorship at the church of San Marco, Venice, from 1613, till his death in 1643. Monteverde was the Wagner of his time, and he was criticised in much the same way ; for Artusi, of Bologna, said of him that "he lost sight of the proper aim of music, viz., to give pleasure." Before entering the field of opera Monteverde had

already become the father of some daring innovations. He made a free use of dissonances previously prohibited. He allowed the dominant seventh, the ninth, and the major fourth to enter unprepared, and he was the first to use the diminished septimachord. He made a special study of orchestration and developed instrumental accompaniments in a manner never before dreamed of. The powers of such a man could find a fitting field only in opera, and in 1607, at a festival at the court of Duke Gonzaga, of Mantua, Monteverde's setting of Rinuccini's "Orfeo" was produced. The next year he wrote "Arianna" and "Il Ballo delle Ingrate." The former met with great success, and his contemporaries speak with especial enthusiasm of the lament of the deserted Arianna. Monteverde wrote a series of operas in Venice, and he was the cause of the establishment of the first opera house, the Teatro San Cassiano, opened in 1637 with "Andromeda," text by Ferrari and music by Manelli. Subsequently the theatre San Moïse was opened with a revival of "Arianna." Opera became the reigning amusement of Venice, and up to 1727 no less than fifteen operatic enterprises were started, and up to 1734 four hundred operas by forty composers were produced.

I cannot leave Monteverde without endeavoring to impress upon the reader's mind his importance in musical history. He was undoubtedly the originator of the modern style of composition. He strove to make the music illustrative of the text in rhythm, melody, and harmony, and to these he added orchestral effects which neither his predecessors nor his contemporaries had ever conceived, and which astonished his musicians. Not only was he the greatest musician of his own age, but he was also the inventor of "a system of harmony which has remained in uninterrupted use to the present day." The unprepared seventh was absolutely new, and numerous other features of harmony, familiar now to almost every child's ear, were first made known by Monteverde. And every one of these combinations was employed by him with an unerring judgment as to its æsthetic significance. His "Orfeo," of which the score has happily been preserved, "may not unreasonably lead us to inquire," as Mr. Rockstro remarks, "whether some of our newest conceptions are really so original as we suppose them to be. The employment of certain characteristic instruments to support the voices of certain members of the *dramatis personæ* is one of them. The constant use of a species of mezzo

recitativo—so to speak—in preference either to true recitative or true melody, is another. But what shall we say of the instrumental prelude, formed, from beginning to end, upon one single chord, with one single bass note sustained throughout? No two compositions can be less alike, in feeling, than this and the introduction to ‘*Das Rheingold*’—yet, in construction, the two pieces are absolutely identical.” The powerful impulse given to dramatic composition by Monteverde, therefore, is still felt; and to him we owe the practical promulgation of the vital principle that the business of dramatic music is to elucidate and intensify the meaning of the text.

Unfortunately it was not long after Monteverde’s death that Italian opera began its descent from the lofty height on which he had placed it. Cavalli, musical director at San Marco in 1668, was the only composer who followed in the master’s footsteps. The demand for ear-tickling phrases grew too great for composers to resist. The poet was relegated to the second place, and tune for tune’s sake became the faith of Italy. Now arose the Neapolitan school and what have been called the palmy days of Italian opera. Alessandro Scarlatti, born in 1659, was the principal composer of this period. His music is

without great breadth or power, but it is graceful and melodious. He exhibits the first tendency toward that style which culminated in Donizetti and Bellini. He fashioned forms of the aria and overture which remained in use long after his time. The overture as written by him consisted of three movements, the first and third lively, and the second slow. Scarlatti was a most accomplished singer and an excellent vocal teacher, and to this must be attributed that decadence in style which began with him. He wrote chiefly for the singer—a practice which has always been the stumbling-block in the path of true musical art.

The new musical form could not long remain within the confines of Italy. It soon found its way into Germany and France. In the former country, however, the taste of the nobles and the people demanded works of the Italian school, and though operas were written by talented men, such as Johann Joseph Fux, Johann Adolf Hasse, Carl Heinrich Graun, and others, we cannot credit them with having materially assisted the progress of our art, for they were compelled to write in the Italian style. In France, thanks to the ability and independence of two men, opera made some progress and the science of music was further de-

veloped. I refer to Giovanni Battista Lulli, born in Florence in 1633, and Jean Phillippe Rameau, born in Dijon in 1683. Lulli endeavored to return once more to that fount of inspiration at which Jacopo Peri drank—the true musical declamation of the Greeks. In this endeavor he sacrificed many of the newly developed forms of operatic music, which he did not appear to be able to replace. He aimed at a close union of tone with speech, and sought earnestly after forcible dramatic expression. To this end he assiduously drilled his principal singers and his choruses in the enunciation of the text, and made large improvements in the histrionic achievements of the operatic stage. His works were held in high esteem up to the time of his death.

Rameau must be set down as a greater musician than Lulli. He added melodic and harmonic beauty to French music, and yet clung as tenaciously to dramatic significance as Lulli. He was severely criticised at first for the exuberance of his style, but after the production of his "Castor and Pollux," in 1737, even his opponents admitted that he was the leading French composer. Rameau's labors were not confined, however, to opera. He was equally distinguished in the domain of theory. He went fur-

ther than his predecessors, who had studied only the connection of chords, and in his "Traité d'harmonie," published in 1722, explained their origin. His rules form the basis of the harmonic theory of our day. Moreover, Rameau brought to perfection equal temperament, which we saw Zarlino beginning to study in Venice a century and a half earlier. He divided the octave into twelve equal half steps, thus removing the impediments offered to the progress of instrumental music by instruments with fixed tuning. Bach had already brought equal temperament into use in 1722, but it was only after the publication in 1737 of Rameau's "*Génération harmonique*" that scientists accepted this system of tuning as the essential basis of music. And this was the death-warrant of the old ecclesiastical modes, from whose ashes arose the only scales now possible—the major and minor. This magnificent work of Rameau's broke down the last of the ancient barriers to modern musical progress, and from that time the great procession of giant composers, whose materials had been fourteen centuries in preparation, takes its unbroken march across the pages of musical history.

CHAPTER III.

HÄNDEL AND BACH.

Let us now go back a little, for the development of music has begun to ramify so that we can follow only one branch at a time. The oratorio was an outgrowth of the old-fashioned miracle plays. These having passed out of the control of the Church and become a popular form of amusement, sank into a state of buffoonery. It remained for St. Philip Neri, consecrated as a priest at Rome in 1561, to take this form of sacred drama and elevate it into the oratorio. He arranged stories from the Scriptures, such as "Job and His Friends," or "Tobias and the Angels," in dramatic form with four-part choruses and occasional solos, and he employed Palestrina to write the music. The performances took place in a small hall, adjoining his church, and called an oratory, or in Italian, oratorio; and hence comes the name of this form of musical drama. Emilio del Cav-

aliere, who, you will remember, was one of the club at Bardi's house in Florence, took up this form and in 1600 produced at Rome his oratorio "L'Anima è Corpo." It should be noted that at this time oratorios were acted like operas with costumes and scenery, and Cavaliere wrote out elaborate directions for the stage "business" of his work, some of which are amusing and instructive, for instance: "The chorus are to have a place allotted them on the stage, part sitting and part standing, in sight of the principal characters; and when they sing, they are to rise and be in motion with proper gestures." Again: "The World and Human Life are to be gayly and richly dressed; and, when they are divested of their trappings, to appear very poor and wretched, and at length dead carcasses." The orchestra of this oratorio consisted of a double lyre, a harpsichord, a large guitar and two flutes.

The development of operatic forms largely influenced and accelerated the advance of the oratorio, and Carissimi, born 1604, composed a number of oratorios full of fine choruses and showing a decided improvement over the opera writers of Peri's day in the use of dramatic recitative. Here is an example from Carissimi's "Jephtha":

A musical score consisting of four staves of music. The top staff is in G major, the second in C major, the third in G major, and the bottom in C major. The lyrics are written in French and Latin, corresponding to the musical phrases. The French lyrics are: "Heu heu mi-hi fi - li - a me-a he de - ci - pisti me, fi - li - a u - ni - ge . ni - ta de - ce pis - ti me, et tu pa - ri - tu heu fi - li - a me-a de - cep - ta es, de - cep - ta es." The Latin lyrics are: "Ave ave mihi filia mea he decipisti me, filia unicunge. nita decet pista me, et tu paratu heu filia mea decepitas, decepitas."

It is necessary here to note the growth of the passion oratorio, which arose from the chief miracle play, still presented once in a decade in dramatic form at Oberammergau, in Bavaria. During Passion Week it was the custom to recite the passion of Christ in a form half epic and half dramatic. In the sixteenth century this was presented by some of the Protestant churches with a musical setting. Henry Schuetz, a German, born in 1585, studied under Gabrieli in Venice, and, returning to Germany, settled at Dresden. Schuetz wrote "Daphne," the first opera produced in Germany, and he composed several passion oratorios, in which are visible the germs of the Händelian style. John Sebastiani, a Prussian chapel-master, published in 1672 passion music in which the Protestant choral, afterward used by Bach with such noble effect, is first introduced. In his music the narrative is no longer chanted in the ecclesiastical style, as it had been before, but is set in recitative accompanied by two violins and a bass. The people sing in four-part choruses, to which the Evangelist, always a tenor, adds a fifth voice. In the chorals only the highest part was sung, and the other parts were played by violas and a bass. In the last stanza of the final choral all the instrumental and vocal parts joined. This estab-

lished the foundation on which Bach built his Passion music. The text underwent further alterations and emendations at the hands of a licentiate named Brockes, who sought to remove certain operatic tendencies lately apparent without destroying the forcefulness of the work.

The way was now paved for the mighty masters of modern music. Opportunity was ready, and not one man, but two came to seize it. On February 23, 1685, at Halle, was born George Frederick Händel. On March 21st, of the same year, at Eisenach, was born John Sebastian Bach. Thus, you see, we are at last face to face with two giants whose monumental works live with all the freshness of their youth in our day, and seem, like wine, to grow stronger, sweeter, and better as the years go by. I shall first consider Händel, because we shall have occasion to refer to his work again when we resume the subject of opera. At present we shall consider him as an oratorio composer, though to be strictly chronological we should take up his great contemporary first. I desire, however, to close this chapter with Bach, because he is the foundation of all that is to follow.

I need not tell you of Händel's childhood, when genius struggled for expression against the

wishes of stern parents and finally triumphed. The story has been written often and well. Suffice it to note here that Händel's career as a composer began in Hamburg, where he wrote his operas "Almira" and "Nero." He went to Florence and there wrote another opera, "Roderigo." He wrote in Venice and again in Rome. In the latter city he produced his first oratorios, through the influence of his friend Cardinal Ottoboni. These were the "Resurrection" and the "Triumph of Time." Leaving Rome, Händel travelled back to Germany. At the court of George of Brunswick, afterward King of England, he met a number of English noblemen who invited him to visit their country. He made a visit of six months, took a flying trip back to Hanover, and then returned to England under the patronage of the Duke of Chandos in 1718. He made England his home, and began his labors as director of the Italian Opera. The story of his struggle and failure in this field I need not tell you in detail. During the period of his career as an Italian opera composer Händel's genius was simply waxing strong with laborious and disagreeable exercise, and, when his last operas were falling still-born from his pen, that genius was simply gathering itself for a newer and grander flight.

While he was chapel-master for the Duke of Chandos, Händel wrote his first English oratorio, "Esther." The manuscript was laid aside for many years, but in 1731 it was revived by Bernard Gates, chapel-master of St. James's, and was repeated a number of times with great success. In 1732 it was performed six times to full houses. It was in 1741 that Händel definitely abandoned the production of operas. From 1732 to 1740 he struggled against the tendencies of his age, producing sixteen operas and five oratorios. From 1741 to 1751 he wrote no operas, but gave to the world eleven oratorios, and the world is still thankful for the period of storm and stress that forced the waters of this noble genius into their true channel. In 1740 were composed and performed "Saul," "Israel in Egypt," and several minor works. In 1741 he went to Ireland, and in Dublin, on April 18, 1742, the immortal "Messiah" was produced, with Signor Avoglio and Mrs. Cibber as the principal singers. The town went mad over it, and when it was produced in London on March 23, 1749, the audience was so affected by the Hallelujah chorus that everyone, including the King, stood up and remained standing till the end of the number—a custom which has been continued till this day. "Samson"

was written for the following Lenten season. His remaining works were the "Dettingen Te Deum," "Semele," "Joseph and his Brethren" (1744), "Hercules" and "Belshazzar" (1745), "Judas Maccabæus" (1747), "Alexander" and "Joshua" (1748), "Susannah" and "Solomon" (1749), "Theodora" (1750), "Choice of Hercules" (1751), and "Jephthah" (1752). His eyes were affected during his work on the last oratorio, and he finally became blind. Händel died on Good Friday night, 1759.

It was in Händel's time that the Bishop of London, Dr. Gibson, finally decided the still debated question whether the oratorio should be given with acting or not. The decision against stage accessories was advantageous to the composer, for it freed him from the limitations which would otherwise have hampered him, and enabled him to appeal to the imagination and exalt the heart solely through the medium of the music. It is very easy to fancy what Händel's "Messiah" would have lost in nobility if it had been arranged for stage performance.

The "Messiah" is known wherever classical music is heard. Few that listen to its inspired strains have ever heard of "Rinaldo" or "Orlando." It is, therefore, hardly necessary to say that the composer's fame rests wholly on his

oratorios. Emil Naumann calls especial attention to Händel's achievement in perfecting the epic element in oratorio. Händel, he notes, was the first to depart from subjects immediately connected with the birth or passion of Christ. He even went further, and wrote oratorios on pagan subjects. Moreover, he changed the form and treatment of the oratorio. The old German passion-oratorios were obviously designed for church service. The frequent introduction of chorales and the elevation of the "lyrical expression of devotion and moral reflection" at the expense of narrative or delineation point to this. Händel frequently omits chorals altogether. The reflections are more often assigned to the personages of the drama. The old-fashioned narrator is removed, and, instead of being told of Samson's blindness, we hear Samson himself crying, "Total eclipse!" The dramatic element of the oratorio is immensely increased in power by these changes. Naumann brings out these points very clearly. In the progress of musical technique Händel stands in a transition period, as Sir George Macfarren notes. He wrote under the domination of the ancient laws of counterpoint, to which exceptions had not been as yet set forth by the theorists. Yet he did much toward breaking the power of the old

law. His works freely demonstrate the principle of fundamental harmony and the use of chromatics. His orchestration, of course, sounds thin and scant to ears fed on Wagner and Berlioz ; but it would be better for the health of art if ambitious conductors, not gifted with the genius of a Mozart, abstained from supplying Händel's oratorios with additional accompaniments. It is as a vocal writer, however, that the master excels. His verbal declamation is marvellously expressive, and he has shown everywhere a prodigious power of dramatic characterization in his vocal music. But he reaches his supreme ability in the sublimity of his choral writing, which, though full of rich contrapuntal device, never lacks clearness or melody. He possessed, in the most exalted form, the secret of artfully concealing art, and he understood better than any writer, before or since his time, how to produce grand choral effects by means apparently simple, but in reality complex. The whole formal material of his art Händel made subservient to his purposes. He combined the science of an Ockeghem with the artistic purpose of a Josquin and the exalted purity of style of a Palestrina. But embodying, as he did, the fervid, yet austere spirit of Protestantism in his music, he surpassed all composers who had

lived before him in the nobility of his melody, the largeness of his forms, and the sublimity of his ideas. He borrowed unscrupulously from the works of his predecessors, thus showing that the old custom of selecting an extant cantus firmus for contrapuntal treatment had not quite disappeared in his day ; but whatever he borrowed he so thoroughly renovated that it became fairly his own. Yet with all his greatness Händel founded no school. As Mr. Marshal has said : “ That which is imitable in his work is simply the result of certain forms of expression that he used because he found them ready to his hand ; that which is his own is inimitable. His oratorios are in their own style as unapproached now as ever ; he seems to have exhausted what art can do in this direction ; but he has not swayed the minds of modern composers as Bach has done.”

Johann Sebastian Bach was known to his contemporaries as a brilliant improviser and an accomplished organist. A later generation informed the world of his creative powers ; and to-day he is reverenced as the father of modern music. Bach’s life can be sketched in a few lines. He came of one of the most musical families in the history of the world. His brother, an organist, gave him his first instruction. He

was organist and concert-master in Arnstadt, Mülhausen, Weimar, and Anhalt-Koethen. In 1723 he became cantor of the Thomas-Schule in Leipsic, and held the position till his death on July 28, 1750. Bach, like Händel, sacrificed his eyes on the altar of music and died blind.

Bach distinguished himself in three departments of music: As a writer for the organ and clavichord (the precursor of the piano), of orchestral works, and of passion music. His "Well-tempered Clavichord," a series of compositions written with the purpose of making known the system of equal temperament, on which he and Rameau appear to have been working contemporaneously, and his "Twenty-four Preludes and Fugues," remain the greatest masterpieces of their class, and they have furnished education and inspiration to every organist and pianist from his day to ours. His orchestral suites and concertos are still performed in the concert room and welcomed with enthusiastic applause; and his passion music remains the loftiest and most imposing musical expression of Protestant faith. In his sacred cantatas and passion oratorios, Bach stands above all musicians who have ever lived. His relation to the development of the Protestant choral is similar to Palestrina's relation to that of the

Gregorian chant. In all of Bach's works, his cantatas, motets, oratorios and organ compositions, we meet the choral with every conceivable accompaniment of harmonic treatment. It reaches its loftiest height in his cantatas, of which he wrote five sets for every Sunday and holiday in the year, besides many single ones, and others for special occasions, such as the "Trauer-ode" on the death of the Electress of Saxony. He also wrote many secular cantatas, including two of a humorous nature.

Bach is believed to have written five Passions, but only two are preserved.* These are the Passions according to St. John and St. Matthew. The latter is generally conceded to be the greater. It is not often performed, because it is a difficult work to give in a satisfactory manner, and appeals chiefly to persons of the most cultivated musical taste. The narrative part of the Passion is assigned to a tenor voice. The words of Jesus, Peter, the Priest, and Pontius Pilate are sung by a bass, and the people

* Dr. Philip Spitta, in his great Life of Bach, has brought together much valuable evidence to show that the Cantor of Leipzig wrote five passions. That according to St. Mark is lost. The authorship of the St. Luke Passion has been disputed, but Dr. Spitta argues with much force that Bach wrote it. The majestic St. Matthew Passion was produced on Good Friday, April 15, 1729.

are represented by the chorus. The Daughter of Zion and the Christian congregation accompany the action with moral observations. The Protestant faith is represented by the introduction of suitable chorals. The St. John Passion was written in 1724 and the St. Matthew in 1729. In the latter the passion oratorio culminated. No one has undertaken to write another, for all musicians agree that it would unquestionably be impossible to surpass, and probably to equal, Bach's master-work.

The *a cappella* four, five, and eight part motets of this genius are also of the highest importance in the field of sacred music, ranking second to nothing but his own cantatas. These are generally written in double chorus, with a fine variety of groupings and divisions of the two vocal bodies, and a union of both in a grand fugue. The Protestant choral is freely used in these motets, sometimes being set in its simplest form as a finale and again being made the subject of a stupendous fugue. Bach's use of the choral as a cantus firmus for contrapuntal treatment was a new application of the old custom which we saw in vogue in the days of the Netherlanders two centuries earlier. Bach and Händel simultaneously carried their plan to perfection, and filled this manner of composing

with a depth of feeling of which the Netherlanders had no conception. Bach's knowledge of counterpoint was limitless, and he readily absorbed all the skill of his predecessors. His views as to the structure of a composition doubtless arose from his familiarity with the concertos of Vivaldi and Albinoni, Venetian violinists, who visited Germany. He added new parts to their compositions and arranged for the organ many of the works which they had written for a single violin. But one of his greatest structural achievements was the perfection of the fugue. To the reader who has not studied the theory of composition I may say that a fugue has been defined as "a regular piece of music, developed from given subjects according to strict contrapuntal rules, involving the various artifices of imitation, canon, and double counterpoint, and constructed according to a certain fixed plan." The necessary parts of a fugue are the Subject, Answer, Counter-subject, and Stretto. To these are often added the Codetta, Episode, Pedal, and Coda. This form of music, I need hardly tell you, was the final outgrowth of the labors of the Netherland school of contrapuntists. It was developed to its utmost perfection by Bach, who wrote a learned treatise on it, called the "Art of Fugue." This was the labor

of the last year of his life, and contains the ripest fruit of his years of study and experience. This work consists of sixteen fugues and four canons, for one piano, and two fugues for two pianos, all on this theme :



To these is added an unfinished fugue on three new subjects, the third being on the name of Bach, according to the German notation :



In addition to this great theoretical work, I need only mention to you the noble array of instrumental compositions left by Bach. He wrote a vast number of piano pieces of all kinds — “inventions” in two and three parts; six French and six English “suites,” the preludes and fugues before mentioned, sonatas (so called) for piano and violin and other instruments, concertos for one to four pianos, concertos for violin and other instruments with orchestra, overtures, suites, and concertos for orchestra, and an endless variety of fantasias, toccatas, preludes, fugues, and arrangements of chorals for the or-

gan. What I want especially to call your attention to here is the grand fact that Bach applied to the structure of these instrumental works the polyphonic method previously confined to vocal music, thus founding modern instrumental music. I cannot do better than quote to you the eloquent words on this topic of Naumann, who says :

“ It was his genius which led him to apply the best of the then existing polyphonic art-forms to ‘ absolute ’ instrumental music, using the form as regards its beauty and perfection of outline, and the polyphony in its contents, in the most complete manner. Nor did he restrict his use of polyphonic art-forms to works for the church instrument—the organ—only, but extensively employed them in his wonderful masterpieces for the harpsichord, the violin, and full orchestra. By this procedure the final, full, and complete impress of liberty was forever set to the tonal art. It was not till then that music, for the first time in its history, was able to stand boldly forth as a free, independent art, as complete in and by itself as Christian architecture and painting were during the latter part of the Middle Ages and the Cinque Cento. Now could it give utterance in precise, intelligible tones to the innermost feelings of the heart.

No longer did it require the support of poetry, biblical or liturgical texts, Church services, civic ceremonies, or dramatic representation to assist it in making itself understood. It was supreme in its own realm of independent tone, sole sovereign in its world of instrumental music."

To this we must add the important fact that, in order to transfer the polyphonic method to instrumental composition, Bach found it necessary to remodel all the forms left him by his predecessors. We saw imitation and canon appear in the old French school and rise to a high level of mechanical development with the Netherlanders. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries organists now forgotten further developed the canonic and fugal forms; but it remained for Bach to produce the model which the world has called perfect and which has remained intact until to-day. And Bach did not stop here. He perfected in his suites and concertos the style of the French and Italian masters of the preceding century. The motet, produced by the Netherlanders, he also completed. In his own sacred cantatas we find the perfect fruit of the cantata of Carissimi and Scarlatti; while the old German passion-plays, having been renovated by Sebastiani, are made pure and sublime in the immortal "Passions" of Bach.

In short, Bach was the culmination of a thousand years of musical growth. In him for the first time were blended all the ideals which had hitherto been pursued by different composers. He seized upon all that was noblest in the Catholic and the Protestant composers, refined it in the fire of his own unapproachable genius, and gave to the world a completed, universal art. He was a human climax. All that he did remains to-day as supreme as it was one hundred and fifty years ago. No master has surpassed him in his own fields ; only two have touched the hem of his garments—Mozart in his “*Requiem*” and Beethoven in his “*Missa Solennis*.” Bach has frequently been compared with Händel, but this is folly. Händel was great in one department of his art : Bach was master in all. Händel has left us the “*Messiah*” and “*Israel in Egypt*,” together with a few other masterpieces, and thousands of pages of music for which the present age has no use. Bach wrote scarcely a measure that we can spare. Händel was a genius in music ; Sebastian Bach was almost divine.

“The cantor of the Thomas-Schule is dead, and the school needs a new one.” So decided the wise and puissant Town Council of Leipzig when Bach lay dead of apoplexy in 1750.

The forgotten widow subsisted on the dregs of bitterest poverty for years, and then betook herself to the grave, where one has no need of food. A subscription, in which the town had no hand, brought tardy relief to the youngest daughter. But Leipsic tore up St. John's Church-yard, wherein the mortal habitation of the mighty spirit had been laid, and scattered the bones of him to the four winds; so that no man knows their resting-place to this day. His works were neglected, and some of them lost; and it was not till Mozart came that the somnolent burghers of Leipsic began to awake to the fact that they had entertained an angel unawares. It was reserved for Mendelssohn to resurrect the great St. Matthew "Passion" and perform it at a Gewandhaus Concert one hundred years after it had been written.

To-day musicians know the power of this wonderful genius that got so little glory during its stay on earth. To-day the students and professors of our divine art bow their heads when Bach's name is spoken and play him religiously, year in and year out, whether the light and fickle public likes him or not, trusting that in time the fire of his genius will burn through the entire world as it has already illumined all that is made of spirit and not solely of matter. No

doubt many, who can hear with pleasure the symphonies of Beethoven or the music dramas of Wagner, wonder why musicians insist upon giving them constitutional doses of Sebastian Bach, accompanied with persistent reiteration of the assertion that this is good for them. Could these people but carry their minds back into Bach's time, and perceive with what unerring wisdom he discarded all that was weak and meretricious in musical style, and increased the value of all that was worthy, adding to it the sublime outpourings of his own creative soul, they would cease to wonder at the frequency of Bach's music in the programmes of the period. They would marvel rather why so little is done to systematically publish to the world the beauties of this man's works and to enlarge and deepen the general respect and affection for his memory.

As a character in the history of music Bach is large and imposing in his simplicity of mind, his modesty of manner, his conscientiousness of effort, his sympathy with the religious and emotional nature of the German people, and his wise use of all that was lofty in musical tradition. As a musician his science was built upon the sternest laws of irrefragable logic, yet he moulded form to a perfect expression of his ideas,

and invented a recitative which for religious purposes has never been excelled, but remains the model and the despair of all composers. By the superficial he is looked upon as the chief apostle of abstruse counterpoint, designed only to confuse the brain. But though in contrapuntal science he is unsurpassed, his merit lies rather in the sublime results which he has achieved than in the means by which he achieved them. His "consistency, fertility, and feeling for organic completeness," as one has well said, are "truly inimitable." The formal materials of his art are so governed and regulated by the singleness of purpose which rules his work that elements, expressive alone, are fashioned into a whole that is charged with immeasurable depth of feeling. This subservience of severe form to the leading idea and masterly moulding of every item of material to the purpose of the man are what, above all else, stamp his writings as perfect art-forms, worthy of the constant and anxious study of all who aspire either to the production or the comprehension of a high order of music. Even as this genius in his system of fingering laid the foundations for the piano virtuosity of to-day, so he cleared the obstacles from the path of church composers for all time, and created

methods of orchestral composition which made possible Beethoven and Wagner.

Let musicians continue to administer Bach as a tonic for the constitution of the musical public. He is needed especially in these days when composers betray a tendency to lose their hold on form and drift out into the void of musical chaos. It is good for us to study the noble effects produced by the cantor of Leipsic with his masterful employment of old formulas, which are too necessary to the well-being of music to be neglected or abused. To students of music I say, as has been said before, Bach is the one musician for musicians. Study him every day, and you will exclaim with Mozart: "Thank God ! I learn something absolutely new."

CHAPTER IV.

INSTRUMENTS AND INSTRUMENTAL FORMS.

We now approach the consideration of that department of our art in which development has been the most rapid and the most marvellous—the orchestra and its music. The instruments used to accompany the singers of the first opera, Peri's "Eurydice," produced not quite two hundred and ninety years ago, were a harpsichord—the piano of that day—a large guitar, a viol, a large lute, and three flutes. The orchestra employed in the third act of "Die Walküre" consists of two piccoli, two flutes, three oboes, one English horn, three clarinets, one bass clarinet, three bassoons, eight horns, four trumpets, one bass trumpet, four trombones, one contra-bass tuba, four tympani, cymbals and bass drum, harp, first and second violins, violas, violoncellos, and double basses. Hector Berlioz, in the *Tuba Mirum* of his "Requiem Mass," has employed, in addition to his orchestra, four

bodies of brass instruments situated in isolated positions at the four corners of the great choral and instrumental body. His score calls for the following imposing array of instruments : Four flutes, two oboes, four clarinets in C, eight bassoons, four horns in E-flat, four horns in F, and four horns in G ; first brass band, north corner—four B-flat cornets, four tenor trombones, two bombardons ; second brass band, east corner—two first trumpets in F, two second trumpets in E-flat, and four tenor trombones ; third brass band, west corner—four trumpets in E-flat and four tenor trombones ; fourth brass band, south corner—four trumpets in B-flat, four tenor trombones, and two ophicleides in B-flat ; one pair of kettle-drums in D-flat and F natural, one pair in G and E-flat, a third pair in G-flat and B-flat, a fourth in B natural and E natural, a fifth in A natural and E-flat, a sixth in A-flat and C natural, a seventh in G natural and D-flat, an eighth pair in F natural and B-flat, a long drum in B-flat, another long drum with two padded drumsticks, a gong, three pairs of cymbals to be struck with sticks, and the customary body of violins, violas, 'cellos, and basses. How has this tremendous growth been accomplished since the beginning of the seventeenth century, and what special line of musical develop-

ment has caused it? I shall endeavor to tell briefly something about the origin of the principal instruments of the orchestra of to-day, but I shall give more attention to the evolution of orchestral music. It is obvious that the instruments were not invented after the scores calling for them were written. The instrument must exist first, and the musician become acquainted with its possibilities before he can compose for it. It does not surprise us then to recall the fact that for centuries after the time of Gregory the Great and the birth of the plain chant no music whatever was written especially for instrumental performance. Instrumental accompaniments, as at first devised, consisted simply of a sounding of the notes in unison with the voice. Though harmony was the result of the discovery that two notes struck simultaneously on an instrument sounded well, it was first applied to vocal music, and the instrumental accompaniment was made of the voice parts. It was not till human passion, in dramatic guise, became a factor in musical composition that any systematic attempts were made at special instrumental treatment. Once begun, however, the experiments of composers have never ceased, and to this day, though it seems as if the great masters of scoring had exhausted its resources,

the search after novel orchestral effects continues—often at the sacrifice of dignity of style, solidity of instrumentation, and honesty of artistic purpose.

Greek tradition tells us that the god Hermes, walking on the sands of the sea, beheld a dead tortoise, whose sun-dried intestines were stretched taut across its shell. He touched one, and it gave forth a musical note; and, seizing upon this suggestion of Nature, he fashioned the seven-stringed lyre, which the ancients played so well and tuned so badly. Another tradition says that the wind whistling through a broken reed suggested the first wind-instruments. The oldest of these is the Pandean pipes, which consists of a number of reeds bound together, one reed for each note. This primeval instrument developed in two directions. It seemed proper to some people to have one pipe that would sound all the notes, and hence came the flute. To others it seemed better to have more pipes and larger pipes than any man could blow, and have them blown and sounded by machinery; and hence grew up the organ. The lyre developed into the violin family and pianos. I have not a great deal of faith in that pretty story about Hermes and the lyre, because the Egyptians had harps with a goodly number of strings before

the god Hermes was invented. So far as we know, the Greeks and Romans had no stringed instruments played with the bow. The violin, the backbone of modern orchestration, probably descended from a three-stringed fiddle called the ravanastron, used by the inhabitants of India in the remotest times, and still seen occasionally in the hands of begging Buddhist priests. From the ravanastron are supposed to have descended in succession the Egyptian rebab, a one-stringed fiddle; the kermangeh, a Mohammedan instrument, made in several sizes like our violin family; the Scandinavian guddok, and the Anglo-Saxon crowth or rottá. From this came the fithele, vitula or viol, and finally the violin, the whole process of evolution occupying five thousand years. Since the violin form was reached there has been no further evolution. The fittest has survived. Some of the violins made in the sixteenth century are still in use, though the best were made in Cremona during the seventeenth century by the Amatis, Straduarius, Guarnerius, and Rugerio.

The first instrument used in art music, however, was the organ, which, being employed in the church, came under the consideration of the only musical scholars of the Middle Ages. The best organist of our time would not know what

to do with one of those early cathedral thunderers. According to the historian Wulston, who wrote in 951, an organ built for Winchester Cathedral had four hundred pipes and thirteen pairs of bellows, requiring seventy blowers. This instrument sounded but ten tones and was built simply to make as big a noise as possible. Only one note at a time was played on these organs and that had to be pressed down with the fist or elbow. As long as only a plain chant was required this system answered well enough; but when harmony was invented, the cumbersome organ could not double the newly arranged voice parts. The mechanism of the organ, therefore, began to improve in answer to the demands of the music of the church. Its changes are too numerous to be described in detail. I need only remind you that as the organ was the instrument upon which Bach performed some of his greatest works, it must have reached a state of large improvement by that time.* I will also call your attention

* Dr. Spitta gives the following account of Bach's organ at Arnstadt: "The organ was splendidly constructed, all the diapasons being of seven-ounce tin, the gedackt also being of metal, instead of wood, as was more usual. The character of the 'Brust-Positiv' must, indeed, have been somewhat shrill, owing to the preponderance of four-foot stops; and it was only by using all the stops in combination that even a moderately good effect could

to the fact that the improvements in the instrument were largely the result of demands made by music. I have already told you that all the instruments used in art music must have existed before the composers adopted them; I now point out to you that as soon as they came in contact with art, the instruments in turn were benefited and were improved so as to expound the new ideas for which they had opened the way.

The monochord and the psaltery, the latter a species of the lyre genus, are generally credited with the parentage of keyed string instruments. It is said that Pythagoras invented the monochord in the sixth century B.C., but he probably borrowed his idea from the Egyptians; for Lepsius says that the principle of dividing a string to obtain tones of different pitch was applied in the Egyptian lute two thousand four hundred years before the days of Pythagoras. The monochord consisted of an oblong sound-box with one string stretched across it and a movable

be produced; nor was there on the pedals any deep stop of moderate strength, still the 'Hauptwerk,' was well arranged." The "Oberwerk," or upper manual, had twelve stops; the "Brust-Positiv," or choir, seven; and the pedals, five, in addition to the coupler. This organ existed till 1863. A new one was then erected as a memorial to Bach, but as many of the old stops as were available were retained.

bridge for dividing the string. This instrument was used to determine the length of intervals. In the course of time the movable bridge was replaced by a more complicated mechanism. Keys to operate levers were fitted in one side of the box and at the other end of each lever was a pin. When the key was pressed down the pin arose, struck the chord, causing it to sound, and at the same time dividing it. More strings were added from time to time, and in the twelfth or thirteenth century the clavichord was gradually developed. Black and white keys, like those of the pianoforte were used, but the principal of the action remained the same as that of the monochord, the hammer simultaneously sounding and dividing the string.

The psaltery was not the instrument called by that name in King James's translation of the Bible. That so-called psaltery was the Hebrew nebel. The true psaltery was the ancient Greek dulcimer. The descendants of this instrument were the harpsichord, spinet, and virginal. In these instruments "the strings were set in motion by points of quill or hard leather elevated on wooden uprights known as 'jacks,' and twitching or plucking them as the depression of the keys caused the points to pass upward." This instrument was very clear in quality and

after its makers learned to give each tone two or more strings it became useful in the orchestra, where it maintained its position till after Händel's time. A description of the various improvements in action, which finally resulted early in the eighteenth century in the production of a practical piano by Gottfried Silbermann, would furnish material for a volume.

Let us now return to the orchestra. The varieties of bow and wind instruments in the early times of our art were far more numerous than they are now. Thus, at the beginning of the Middle Ages there were two kinds of viola: the viola da gamba (leg-viol) and the viola da braccia (arm-viol), and there were thirteen species of these two kinds. At this period the instruments simply doubled the voice parts and were divided into families of basses, tenors, altos, and trebles. But when Claudio Monteverde began to study the special character of each instrument, he paved the way for the inevitable—the death of the useless and the survival of the fittest. The old bass viola became our double-bass; the tenor viola da gamba, our 'cello; the tenor viola da braccia, our viola; and the treble viola da braccia, our violin.

The flute, as we have seen, is the oldest of wind instruments. There were in early ages two

kinds, the straight flute and the cross flute. The former was blown at the end and has become the flageolet ; the latter was blown at the side and is the familiar instrument of to-day. Originally the flute was simply a fife, having six finger-holes. The system of keys now in use, giving the flute a compass of three octaves and making it the most agile of wind instruments, is the result of gradual evolution. The instrument was far from satisfactory, however, until Theobald Boehm, in 1832, introduced his system of boring and keying, which has since been further improved. The piccolo, as you know, is nothing but a small flute with a higher compass and more strident tone. The oboe is one of the most ancient of instruments, representations of it being found in Greek and Egyptian art. In the early days of modern music there was a family of instruments called Bombardi, of which the oboe was the treble. The instrument was originally used in military bands, and existed in several varieties. The Boehm fingering has been applied to the oboe with considerable success, and to-day, though a very difficult and trying instrument, it is indispensable in the orchestra by reason of its characteristic quality of tone and its adaptability for several kinds of effects whose requirements no other instrument will

exactly meet. The English horn is the alto of the oboe and the bassoon its bass. There is also a basson-quinte, which covers the tenor register, but it is seldom used, the bassoon having a sufficient compass. All these are double reed instruments, descended from the Bombardi family. The single reed instruments used in the modern orchestra are the clarinets and the corno di bassetto, the latter employed but seldom. The clarinet is descended from a very old instrument called the shawm. The clarinet was slow in acquiring prominence in the orchestra. Bach and Händel never used it, though they freely employed oboes. Haydn first used two clarinets and a bassoon as a combination of wood wind instruments in his first mass, written in 1751 or 1752, but it was Mozart who raised the clarinet to its position in the orchestra. He also used the corno di bassetto, or tenor clarinet, very freely in his "Clemenza di Tito." In his "Requiem" his only reed instruments are two corni di bassetto and the bassoons. The clarinets in use to-day are the small one in E-flat, employed almost exclusively in military bands, those in A, B-flat and C, and the bass clarinet.

The horn, one of the most important of our modern orchestral instruments, was originally used to sound calls during hunts. According to

Grove's "Dictionary of Music," "the introduction of the horn into the orchestra in France is attributed to Gossec. He, when still very young, was requested to write two airs for the *début* of Sophie Arnould, at the opera in 1757, in which he introduced obligato parts for two horns and two clarinets, the latter instrument being also heard for the first time. Lotti and Scarlatti introduced the horn into Italy, and were followed by Hasse and Alberti. It must have been previously used in Germany, since it appears frequently in the scores of J. S. Bach, who died in 1750. It was first used in England as early as 1720, by the opera band in the Haymarket at the performance of Händel's 'Radamisto.' The trumpet, like the horn, is a very old instrument and was introduced into the orchestra by the earliest orchestral composers. It figures, as you know, importantly in Händel's scores and Glück also makes effective use of it. It has unfortunately become the custom nowadays to use the cornet instead of the trumpet, whose sweet and brilliant tone its blare can never replace. Glück and Händel both employed trombones in the orchestra, and Mozart established their use. Drums appear to have existed from time immemorial in the far East, and were early introduced into the orchestra. They have been

improved, like other instruments, and it is no longer necessary to tighten or loosen the heads of kettle-drums with hand-screws, a pedal having been devised which accomplishes the changes almost instantaneously. Although the harp is one of the oldest of instruments, its introduction into the orchestra was effected by Glück. It was not till 1810, however, that Sebastian Erard completed his improvements which made it possible to play the harp rapidly in all keys; and Berlioz, I believe, was the first to show clearly the full possibilities of the harp as an orchestral instrument. All composers since then have written freely for it, and its peculiar effects add greatly to the beauty of modern scores.

From what I have said concerning the gradual evolution of our modern army of instruments you will gather that the early orchestras, such as that employed by Peri in his "Eurydice," were, according to our ideas, extremely weak and ill-balanced. In harmonic symmetry and in distribution of voices they must have been far less effective than a modern string quartet; and unquestionably the performance of a Jadassohn sextet would surpass the wildest dreams of the operatic composers of 1600.

We now come to the consideration of special instrumental music and its growth. This brings

us face to face with the development of form, especially the sonata and its highest elaboration in the symphony. Instruments, as we have seen, were originally used solely to support the voice, and this they did in the earliest days by playing the same notes as the voices sung. In remote times the religious rituals were sung and a kind of stately dance accompanied the chanting. The music was naturally formed largely to meet the demands of the dance. When vocal music began to develop along special lines the instrumental forms retained the greater rhythmic precision and flexibility, and instrumental music became an elaboration of dance music. During the progress of the art of "descant," of which I have already spoken, and the subsequent rise of contrapuntal church music, the instruments kept pace with the voices in the ornamental and complex figures. With the reforms of Luther and Palestrina, however, a more simple and dignified style became common in the church. Then the instruments continued the ornamental embellishing—the colorature—which the singers had to some extent given up. The inevitable result of the labors of composers in this direction was the development of special instrumental forms, of which the *toccata* is believed to be the oldest.

The characteristic style of this form, with its running and broken figures, made it peculiarly suitable to the instrumental tendency of the time. The form was clearly established by Claudio Merulo, a Venetian organist, who published his first toccatas in 1598. Frescobaldi, who is called the father of modern organ playing, perfected this form. His toccatas contain, as Dr. Spitta notes, "all the musical achievements of his time: the fugue, free imitation, brilliant passage work, and mighty torrents of chord successions." This growth of the toccata as the earliest instrumental form points to the fact that organ playing had already reached a high stage of development. From the time of Conrad Paumann, of Nuremberg, who flourished in the fifteenth century, a long line of organists stretches forward. Among the earlier German masters were Hofhaimer, Legrant, Paumgartner, and Von Puttenberg. Later came Arnold Schlick, Jacob Buus, Ammerbach, Bernhard Schmid, Jacob Paix, Pachelbel, Buxtehude, and finally the immortal Bach, who brought order out of chaos and breathed the spirit of perpetuity into certain germinal forms. Previous to his time the organ forms were uncertain. These old masters wrote what they called fantasias, ricerari, capricci, contrapunti, introduzioni, and

canzoni ; but I beg you to understand that these were nothing more than improvisations of undetermined plan. They were, in short, nothing more than a lofty kind of descant, a refined contrapuntal elaboration of a set theme by means of the various devices invented by the great Netherland contrapuntists—a school which exercised a more absolute sway over the realm of music than any other school has ever obtained, either before or since their time.

Cantabile playing grew out of the use of the Italian canzone, which was a simple air in the song style. The Gabrieli's, Andrea and Giovanni, who flourished during the latter part of the fifteenth century in Venice, wrote in this style and made use of bow and wind instruments in the short preludes which they wrote to their vocal pieces. Some of the Gabrieli compositions were written for either voices or instruments ; and when they were played, they were called sonatas, because they were sounded. These early sonatas, you see, bore no resemblance to those of to-day.

I have already told you that instrumental composers, once set free from their adherence to vocal forms, turned their attention to dance music. It soon became apparent to them that agreeable contrasts might be produced by play-

ing dance tunes of different character consecutively. Morley, in his "Plain and Easy Introduction to Practical Music," published in 1597, says that it is effective to alternate pavanes and galliards, because the former are "a kind of staid music ordained for grave dancing," and the latter for "a lighter and more stirring kind of dancing." He also calls attention to the contrast in rhythm, one being in common and the other in triple time. Here we see the first attempts at consecutive movements. This method of composition resulted in the suite, which has been cultivated by the majority of orchestral composers down to our day, though here again it was the genius of Bach that established the style and left the model for his successors to follow.

The only feature of the suite that remains in the modern symphony is the division into separate movements of contrasting character. But there was no coherence in the suite. Any one of its parts might have been played alone, whereas our symphony is a symmetrical whole, with a definite design carried out from beginning to end. The impulse toward the development of the sonata form in this manner came from the overture in three connected movements, which was cultivated by Scarlatti in Italy and

Lulli in France. The skeleton of that form supports the flesh and blood of our modern concerto, and its higher elaboration is seen in our piano and orchestra sonatas. It was the introduction of the dramatic element into music which finally led composers to elaborate a form capable of expressing emotion without the aid of words or action ; and it was not until the instrumental writers became so bold in experiment and so facile in expression that they could throw aside the old styles on which they had leaned for support, that the new and symmetrical form came forth. It would be interesting and profitable to trace the gradual steps by which the sonata advanced, but to do so would be to enter too deeply into mere technicalities. Some few points of this progress, however, we can briefly notice.

The instrumental composers got their first ideas from the Church. Hence we are not surprised to find that some of the early sonatas (so called) consisted of one movement in fugal style throughout. The second source of ideas was the dance tunes, and we accordingly find some of the early sonatas alternating movements in ecclesiastical with others in dance style. The third source of ideas was the lyric drama. Dr. Parry, in his article on the sonata in Grove's

Dictionary, describes a violin sonata in C minor by H. J. F. Biber, published in 1681. It has five movements. The first is an introductory largo of contrapuntal character, with clear and consistent treatment in the fugally imitative manner; the second is a passacaglia, which answers roughly to a continuous string of variations on a short and well-marked period; the third is a rhapsodical movement consisting of interspersed portions of poco lento, presto, and adagio, leading into a gavotte; and the last is a further rhapsodical movement alternating "adagio and allegro." Dr. Parry points out the derivation of the movements as being "in the first the contrapuntalism of the music of the Church; in the second and fourth, dances; and in the third and fifth, probably operatic or dramatic declamation." This sonata shows no sign of that methodic repetition of subjects and definite arrangement of keys now indispensable in a sonata. But the work was a great improvement on the unsystematic compositions of earlier instrumental writers. About this time in Italy, Corelli, who died in 1713, was writing violin sonatas in several movements, and the Venetian violinist Vivaldi, who died in 1743, wrote a concerto in three movements. Corelli's works are of great importance in their influence

on the progress of the sonata form. He wrote twenty-four "Church Sonatas" and twenty-four "Chamber Sonatas," in addition to twelve for the violin and 'cello. In these works we find many of the germs of the present sonata form. Most of them were in four movements, beginning with a slow one. In the church sonatas the second movement is fugal; in the chamber sonatas it is an allemande or a courante. The third movement is always slow and full of chord effects. The last movement is always lively, gavottes and gigues occurring frequently in the chamber sonatas. Corelli's influence is indisputable. He fixed a form for the sonata which was adopted by Tartini, Vivaldi, Locatelli, Nardini, Veracini, Léclair, Rust, Albinoni, Purcell, Porpora, Händel, and even Bach. Yet this form strikes us now as most uncertain. Corelli evidently felt that something was to be accomplished by a style of composition that was free from the fugal restraints of the older writers, but he did not know just how to proceed. And one thing which greatly hampered him was the prejudice among artistic writers against simple tune, which prevented Corelli from finding his way to that distinct enunciation of subjects expected by the modern hearer. Johann Kuhnau, Bach's predecessor at the Thomas School,

wrote sonatas of uncertain form for the clavier, which may be regarded as the precursors of our piano sonatas. But he, too, was restricted by the prevalence of ecclesiastical style in music.

Domenico Scarlatti (1683-1757), though he wrote his so-called piano sonatas in one movement, took one of the greatest steps toward the modern style of instrumental music by substituting for the polyphonic method, which restrained even the genius of Bach, the homophonic, in which the melody reigns supreme, and the accompaniment is relegated to a secondary position. Scarlatti, too, made clear the difference between the technique of the organ and that of the piano, introducing such features as rapid repetition of a note with successive fingers, broken chords in contrary motion for both hands, and other performances now familiar to all pianists. Scarlatti, moreover, made a distinct announcement of his musical themes and impressed them on the hearer's mind by frequent repetition. The movements composed by writers immediately succeeding Scarlatti, whom I have no time to speak of in detail, were uncertain in their distribution but approached regularity and definiteness in their internal structure.

Carl Philip Emmanuel Bach, second son of Se-

bastian, further improved the sonata form. One of his styles of sonata became recognized as the best that had been contrived up to that time, and both Haydn and Mozart subsequently made frequent, though not invariable, use of it. Most of his important sonatas are in three movements, the first and third lively and the second slow. The chief merits of his sonatas are their pointed emphasis, clearness, and certainty of construction. Emmanuel Bach also wrote eighteen symphonies, in which the great orchestral work of later days is dimly foreshadowed. But the sonata and its orchestral form the symphony were to be further developed by Haydn and Mozart, and to reach their perfection in the hands of the mighty Beethoven.

Nothing has been added to the development of the sonata form since Beethoven's day. The reader must not imagine, however, that this form is rigidly fixed. Within certain recognizable limits it admits of much variety. The classic symphony, which is taken as the model, consists of four movements. The first is an allegro, usually introduced by a slow passage. The second is a slow movement—*andante*, *largo*, *larghetto*, or modified *allegro*. The third in the older works is a minuet with trio, superseded later by the *scherzo* and *trio*. The fourth is an-

other allegro, usually more vigorous than the first. The first movement of a symphony is generally built on either the applied song form or the rondo form. The song form is the result of combining several artistically constructed melodies in one composition. The rondo is a song form distinguished by frequent repetitions of the leading theme. Thematic development and modulation are largely employed in the first movement of a symphony.

The second movement is very variable. It is founded on the same system as the first, but is shorter and less complex. The theme and variations are often employed. The minuet and trio are direct descendants of the old dance forms, and present no systematic difference. The scherzo is extremely free in form, its peculiarity consisting chiefly in style. Let the reader compare the scherzi of Beethoven with those of Mendelssohn, and he will perceive how important is the difference of style. The applied song form and rondo form appear again in the last movements of modern symphonies.

CHAPTER V.

THE GREAT INSTRUMENTAL WRITERS.

The latest and most important advances toward the present high development of the art of orchestration were made by the late Richard Wagner. He carried the employment of the technical resources of the modern orchestra to a point which will probably not be passed very soon. The foundations of our present orchestration were laid by Joseph Haydn, born, 1732, died, 1809. Wagner was born in 1813. The entire development of orchestral writing, exclusive of the preparatory experiments in the sonata form, was accomplished between the birth of Haydn and the death of Wagner, in the brief span of two human lives—for only four years elapsed between Haydn's death and Wagner's birth. Music had descended from the lofty pedestal on which Sebastian Bach placed it, and when Haydn was a young man the object of all composers was to write tastefully. The

deeper æsthetic quality of music was less sought after. Haydn reawakened the old hunger for sincerity in art, and paved the way for Mozart. Gluck had made experiments in the special treatment of orchestral instruments which revealed many possibilities hitherto unknown, but his work was entirely in the field of operatic accompaniment, not in that of pure instrumental music. Haydn may fairly claim the proud title of father of the symphony and the string quartet.

He wrote 118 symphonies, 83 string quartets, 24 trios, 44 piano sonatas, 5 oratorios, 15 masses, 19 operas, 163 pieces for the baryton—a kind of viola da gamba—German and Italian songs for one and three voices, and many minor compositions. He is the first composer whose works in the sonata form show an invariable aim at achieving something nobler in the æsthetic sense than a mere effective contrast of movements. Mozart and Beethoven accepted his principles, amplified and ennobled them by the power of their own individual genius, but did not materially alter the fundamental plan. Haydn's sonatas usually begin with an allegro. To this movement he imparted fuller significance, and his thematic development was so arranged as to give it unity. His first movements

nearly always have three parts : First, the principal subject, which decides the character of the whole movement ; second, a part composed of motives from the first part varied by harmonic modulation and contrapuntal imitation ; third, a repetition of the first, with some minor changes in treatment. Thus, you see, one of his allegri is a well-worked development of given themes with a symmetrical and effective return to the original idea, the whole having the character of an art-work built on a carefully prepared design. His second movement is a largo, adagio, or andante, treated with broad harmony, and always full of sentiment. The finale is usually a lively and humorous movement in the rondo form, the special feature of which is periodical repetition of the leading motive. The reader who is familiar with the great sonatas of Mozart and Beethoven will see that they are modelled after this plan with such changes as we should naturally expect from the characters of the men.

One of the greatest strides made by Haydn in his development of the sonata form was his substitution of what Naumann calls the duo thematic style for the monothematic. The writers who preceded him had used but one theme for each movement, with rare exceptions which can be regarded only as unsystematic experiments.

Haydn, however, consciously aimed at the use of two independent themes, and he began his labors in this direction early. In the allegros of three of his earliest sonatas (22, 24, and 29 Pohl *) we find second themes separated from the principal subjects by rests and wholly independent in melody, rhythm, and harmony. He appears to have been uncertain as to the wisdom of his method, and in some subsequent sonatas his second subjects are subordinated ; but the greater number of his mature English symphonies show absolute freedom in the treatment of their second themes.

“ It was from Haydn,” said Mozart, “ that I first learned the true way to compose quartets.” We have noted some of the earlier attempts at sonatas for two violins, viola, and ’cello ; but it remained for Haydn to raise the quartet to its recognized position in music. He wrote his quartets in the sonata form already described, inserting between the slow movement and the finale the menuetto. Haydn possessed in great

* Carl Ferdinand Pohl, born at Darmstadt, 1819, biographer of Haydn. His catalogue of Haydn’s works is the standard one, and the compositions are now invariably designated by reference to his numbers. The main facts of his great biographical work are condensed in his article on Haydn in *Grove’s Dictionary of Music*, and have been employed almost exclusively in the present volume.

fulness all the attributes of a great quartet writer. He had the faithful adherence to design, the exhaustive knowledge of contrapuntal means, and the thorough acquaintance with the resources of his instruments without which it is impossible to write good quartets. He had, too, a fecund melodic invention and a wealth of fancy for presenting his themes in new and delightful aspects. Moreover, his string quartets are full of a buoyant, happy enthusiasm which made them in his day the favorite music of the salons, where they became the active missionaries of musical progress.

Haydn owed much to the experiments of his predecessors in orchestral writing, yet he himself established the symphony as we know it. His first symphony was composed in 1754, and his last in 1795. During the intervening period Mozart had been born, had lived his marvellous life, and died. He learned his early lessons from Haydn, but in later life Haydn became the pupil, and his maturer symphonic works show that he profited by the labors of the mighty Mozart. One material feature of his work points to it, if no æsthetic quality does. Mozart made new and beautiful use of the clarinet, and Haydn in his later works did likewise. It was a happy thing for Haydn that he had an oppor-

tunity during his career to conduct a small band of orchestral performers, who willingly entered into the spirit of his plans and assisted him in his orchestral experiments. He was forced to invent, improve, and enlarge instrumental writing at every step, but his players readily learned the new language which he taught them. Of course, I refer to the celebrated orchestra of Prince Esterhazy.* The art of orchestration was in its infancy in Haydn's days, and his instrumental combinations are, therefore, original, ingenious, characteristic, and effective. Some of his works are written for a very small array of instruments, as in the Queen of France Symphony, of which the score calls for two horns, two oboes, one flute, two bassoons, first and second violins, violas, and basses. On the other hand, the introduction to the "Creation" is scored for two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, a contra-bassoon, two horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tympani, and the usual strings. Händel and Bach treated instruments, to a large extent, as if they were

* The Esterhazy orchestra in 1766 consisted of 17 players: 6 violins, and violas, 1 'cello, 1 double-bass, 1 flute, 2 oboes, 2 bassoons, and 4 horns. It was afterward enlarged to 22 and 24, including trumpets and tympani when required, and, from 1776 to 1778, clarinets.

voices or organ parts interwoven with the other voice parts. Haydn, in his oratorios and operas, treated the orchestra as an independent factor always moving in its own way.

All attempts at specific tone-coloring before Haydn were unsatisfactory. He and Mozart developed this particular feature of orchestral writing. Above all, Haydn was the first who endeavored to make the orchestra paint impressions for him. All previous composers who had made experiments in this direction had done so in opera or oratorio, where text or action was the chief vehicle of expression, the orchestra being secondary and illustrative. Haydn was the first who tried to picture the external, or the internal impression made by the external, with orchestral means alone. His orchestra depicted chaos, the waning of winter storms, the birth of spring, and the bloom of summer. In accomplishing this he laid the foundation of all our modern programme music, and indicated the means by which the composers of the romantic school were to climb the pinnacles of human emotion, till sometimes they lost themselves in clouds of mysticism. The pastoral symphony, Raff's "Im Walde," and the "Waldweben" of "Siegfried" are lineal descendants of Haydn's "Creation" and "Seasons;" and the "Liebestod" of "Tristan"

has some of the blood of his "Farewell" symphony in its veins. Indeed bars 51 to 54, inclusive, of the introduction to "The Creation" are Wagner-like in melody, harmony, and especially in instrumentation. In his symphony he bequeathed to us a large, well-planned, thoroughly elaborated and symmetrical design for great orchestral compositions. Until some mighty mind contrives for us a more satisfactory plan, we must continue to regard Haydn as the originator of our loftiest form of absolute music. But, no matter what the changes of the future may be, we shall always be forced to look back to him as the first to perceive the spiritual power of absolute music, the first to reveal it to us as the language of emotion.

We now come to the work of him who was Haydn's master as well as his pupil. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, born at Salzburg, January 27, 1756, died, December 5, 1791, was the most universal genius in music that the world has ever seen. He was great as a writer of tragic, romantic, and comic operas, great as a composer of symphonies, quartets, and quintets, great as a writer of piano concertos and sonatas, great as a writer of songs, great as a composer of church music, great as an executive musician. The special tendency of Mozart's genius was toward operatic

composition, but had he lived beyond thirty-five years it is impossible to imagine what he might not have achieved in all departments of music.

I shall not now consider his operatic productions, but shall endeavor to briefly indicate what impression he made upon the progress of music in other departments, treating especially of his instrumental compositions and principally of his orchestral work. His oratorio-cantata, "David the Penitent," was largely made up of parts of an unfinished mass in C minor, written at Salzburg in 1783, together with some new numbers written in 1785. The music of this work is admirable, but Jahn criticises the new numbers as too florid for oratorio. That Mozart subsequently learned to grasp the oratorio spirit is shown by his additional accompaniments to "The Messiah," which are perfect in their Händelian feeling. The "Requiem" of Mozart fully establishes his claim to unsurpassed influence on the present music of the Catholic Church. It has been called the "highest and best that modern art has to offer to sacred worship." His masses—especially the grand one in C minor, and the short ones in F major (Köchel,* 192)

* The standard catalogue of Mozart's works is that of Dr. Ludwig Köchel (1800-1877). It was published by Breitkopf & Härtel, of Leipsic, in 1862.

and C major (Köchel, 258) are masterpieces and remain models of church composition. Jahn* successfully refutes the assertion that his masses were his weakest works. Again, Mozart invented the art song ; that is, the song in which each verse is set to music varying in character according to the words, instead of being set to the same melody without reference to the meaning. He could not help writing like a master, no matter how unimportant the work in hand. He composed two pieces in F minor for musical clocks. When Mendelssohn's friend Rietz heard them, he said : "And those were written for mechanical clocks ! What is now left for us to do ?"

In instrumental music Mozart lifted to still higher levels the forms already improved by Haydn. He is the connecting link between Haydn and Beethoven. Mozart studied Haydn's piano sonatas early in life, and quickly began to compose in this form. His superb imaginative powers led him to enrich and enlarge the old design. He heightened and defined the contrast between the principal and secondary theme of the first movement, making the first of spirited

* Otto Jahn (1813-1869), philologist, archæologist, and writer on art and music ; author of the standard life of Mozart, a noble work.

nature and the second of a singing character. The vocal character of Mozart's melody is proverbial; it is predominant throughout his works.

Jahn calls attention to this song-like character in Mozart's instrumental melodies and his prodigality in the use of them. He points out the fact that the composer's fecundity "excluded, or greatly limited, the employment of connecting passages without sense or meaning." And he says, further: "The second respect in which Mozart's method was a gain to music was in the clearness which it gave to his designs. This clearness is an inseparable adjunct of Mozart's art; and by means of it the main points of his structure were as clearly defined as an architectural ground-plan, and became the supports for elaboration and development. Mozart himself was far from exhausting the resources of the method he founded; others have followed in his footsteps, and Beethoven, his intellectual heir, has displayed all the depth and wealth of that which he has inherited."

The concerto was largely improved and developed by Mozart. The one quality of his concertos which most forcibly strikes the critic is their artistic sincerity. No form of music has been more abused. The germinal idea of the concerto was a desire to display at one and the

same time the resources of the solo instrument and the accomplishments of the player. These accomplishments naturally included poetic conception ; but this in time was obscured—as it frequently is in our day—by the eagerness to astonish the multitude with technical brilliancy. I can find only two kinds of pianists who have any reason to expect consideration from the public, and only one of these has a legitimate place in art. The first is the player of surprising technical virtuosity, who overwhelms the audience with the strength and brilliancy of his execution. The second is he who, with sufficient technical facility to enable him to surmount the difficulties of the great piano compositions, is able to so interpret the work in hand that the auditors shall perceive its nobility and be swayed by its beauty. It is obvious that only the second is an artist. The other is simply an acrobat. It is undeniable that the same principles apply to the composer of concertos. He must not write solely to heap up brilliant and difficult passages, but must offer the hearer poetic ideas. It is just here that Mozart triumphed and left us model concertos. He was a great pianist, and he composed in such a manner that his skill as a player was fully shown ; but every ornament and difficulty in his twenty-

seven pianoforte concertos was subordinated to the poetic idea and to symmetry of construction. He also elevated the orchestral accompaniment. The working out of the themes was distributed among the different instruments in such a way as to fill the composition with light and shade, and make the solo a central striking figure, as it were, in the midst of a landscape of music.

Mozart's quartets are still a mine of inexhaustible wealth to lovers of music. He did not advance beyond Haydn in the matter of form, but he wrote with superior melodic and harmonic treatment, and with nobler sentiment. His six string quartets dedicated to Haydn—"the fruit of long and laborious work," according to his own statement—are marvellous in wealth of ideas, symmetry of form, and mastery of the technical resources of the instruments. The grand quartet in G minor for piano and strings is worthy of special study. You will find in its first movement that Mozart knew how to be harsh when his mood demanded it.

As an orchestral writer Mozart, extending and deepening the significance of Haydn's improvements, towers above his predecessors. Köchel gives us a list of forty-nine symphonies written by him, in addition to an immense number of

compositions of various kinds written for different combinations of instruments. Of his symphonies nine stand pre-eminent. They are numbered in the Köchel catalogue 201, 297, 338, 385, 425, 504, 543, 550, and 551. Three are in C major, one with three movements, one in four, and the Jupiter Symphony with its double fugue. Three are in D major, with three, four, and five movements, and of the other three one is in A major, one in G minor, and one in E-flat.

Jahn points out that the symphonies in C major and G major, 425 and 444 Köchel, "bear clear traces of Haydn's influence, direct and indirect." Several years passed before he wrote his next symphony in D major, 504 Köchel. Jahn says : "The first glance at the symphony shows an altered treatment of the orchestra ; it is now fully organized, and both in combination and detail shows individual independence. The instrumentation is very clear and brilliant—here and there, perhaps, a little sharp—but this tone is purposely selected as the suitable one. Traces of Haydn's influence may be found in the prefixing of a solemn introduction to the first allegro, as well as in separate features of the andante ; such, for instance, as the epigrammatic close ; but in all essential points we have nothing but Mozart."

It was a year and a half later when Mozart again took up the composition of symphonies, and then in two months, in 1788, he wrote those in E-flat, G minor, and C major, 543, 550, and 551 Köchel. These symphonies, according to Jahn, "display Mozart's perfected power of making the orchestra, by free movement and song-like delivery, into the organ of his artistic mood;" and he quotes Richard Wagner, who says: "The longing sigh of the great human voice, drawn to him by the loving power of his genius, breathes from his instruments."

These symphonies show a great advance beyond Haydn in instrumental treatment. The themes, as well as contrapuntal combinations of them, are more frequently heard in the wind, and we gradually learn, in looking over these works, that Mozart was the father of what we know as tone-color.* His compositions for or-

* The constitution of Mozart's orchestra is worthy of especial notice. His nearest approach to our present orchestra is in the D major symphony, Köchel, 297, which is scored for violins, violas, basses, two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns, two trumpets and kettledrums. Clarinets are employed in only one symphony written previous to that time—Köchel, 18, E-flat major. They occur again in the E-flat major symphony, Köchel, 543. Two oboes, two horns, and two trumpets formed his principal symphonic combination of wind instruments. Sometimes he used four horns, sometimes flutes, and again bassoons. The

chestra date back over one hundred years, yet some of his instrumental combinations still come to us with all the force of novelty. His skill in instrumentation is as finely displayed in the serenades and divertimenti as in the symphonies. You have only to hear or read his serenades in B-flat major for 12 wind instruments and double bass; in C minor for 8 wind instruments; in D major for 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 fagotti, 2 horns, trumpets, kettledrums, and strings; in G-flat for 2 clarinets, 2 horns, 2 fagotti, and 2 oboes; and in B-flat for 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 basset-horns, 4 horns, 2 fagotti, 'cello, and double bass, to understand the force of this assertion. His mastery of form and his ability to express the noblest ideas while conforming to the strictest rules of counterpoint were almost equal to Bach's. In the last movement of the Jupiter symphony he effected a combination that is still unsurpassed in all music. He made a fugue on the symphonic plan, fusing in a marvellous way the two art-forms which seem to be most distinct from one another. As an inventor in the domain of instrumental music we must accord Haydn the first place; but Mozart condescended to borrow nothing from him save his forms.

orchestra of Haydn's first symphony, composed in 1759, consisted of violins, violas, basses, two oboes, and two horns.

His ideas, his style, his coloring, are all his own, and are all greater than those of any man who preceded him. We shall be better able to consider the tremendous scope and majesty of his genius when we come to review the growth of opera; but we cannot fail to be lost in admiration of the wonderful poetry of the thoughts he clothed in instrumental expression, nor the surpassing beauty of his instrumental language. He founded no school, yet he paved the way for Beethoven, who never ceased to acknowledge his veneration for the genius of the glorious boy.

And now arises before us the image of one whose name no lover of music can hear without emotion—Ludwig van Beethoven, born 1770, died 1827. At the age of twenty-seven Beethoven began to suffer severely from a disease of the ears, which finally resulted in total deafness. To some men this would not have been so sad a misfortune as it was to the composer. In a letter written to his friend Wegeler, in 1800, he says: “My hearing during the last three years has become gradually worse; my ears are buzzing and ringing perpetually day and night. I can say with truth that my life is very wretched. For nearly two years past I have avoided all society because I find it impossible to say to peo-

ple, ‘I am deaf.’ In any other profession this might be more tolerable; but in mine such a condition is truly frightful.” You will readily understand that, feeling thus, Beethoven’s life was a continual fever of suspicion, distrust, and grief, rendered endurable only by the high moral courage and indomitable will of the man. His entire inner life was a prolonged period of storm and stress. A popular novelist has said: “Life is a comedy to those who think, a tragedy to those who feel.” Beethoven was one of those who feel, and feeling with the rare and intensified bitterness of a nature forced to feed chiefly on itself, his existence was a long, deep tragedy. I tell you thus much of Beethoven’s life because it is the key to a proper understanding of his matchless genius. In him the emotional, the dramatic, the tragic in absolute music, attained the highest expression that the world has yet seen. Indeed, the only master-genius that has risen since his day—Richard Wagner—declared his belief that beyond Beethoven absolute music could not go. While it would be unwise to accept a dictum which sets a limit to the youngest of the arts, this declaration may be received as a fair representation of the enormous effect of Beethoven on the minds of other great musicians.

Beethoven wrote less music than his predecessors, but he wrote more than casual concert-goers are aware of. His vocal compositions consist of one opera, two masses, one oratorio, two cantatas—"The Glorious Moment" and "Praise of Harmony"—the "Ruins of Athens," the choral fantasia, 21 patriotic finales, the "Egmont" music, "Calm Sea and Prosperous Passage," "Ah, Perfido," "Tremate" (trio with orchestra), a "Song of Sacrifice," "Bundeslied" for 2 solos, chorus, and wind, an elegiac song for 4 voices and strings, 66 songs and 1 duet with piano accompaniment, the "Gesang der Mönche" for 3 voices *a capella*, 18 canons, and 7 books of English, Scotch, Irish, Welsh, and Italian songs for voice, piano, 'cello, and violin. His instrumental works are 9 symphonies, the "Battle of Vittoria," the "Prometheus" music, 9 overtures, an allegretto in E-flat, a march from "Tarpeia," a military march, 12 minuets, 12 German dances, 12 contradances and the Ritter ballet, all orchestral works; 1 concerto for violin, and 2 romances, 5 piano concertos, 1 piano concerto arranged from that for violin, 1 rondo and 1 triple concerto for piano, 1 choral fantasia for piano, orchestra, and chorus; 2 octets for wind, 1 septet for strings and wind, 1 sestet for strings and wind, 1 sestet for wind,

THE GREAT INSTRUMENTAL WRITERS. III

4 quintets for strings, 16 quartets for strings, 2 equali for 4 trombones, 5 trios for strings, 1 trio for strings and flute, 1 trio for wind, 3 duos for wind, 1 quintet for piano and wind, 1 quartet for piano and strings, 8 trios for piano and strings, variations in G and 14 in E-flat for piano and strings, 2 trios for piano, clarinet, and 'cello, 10 sonatas, 1 rondo and 12 variations in F for piano and violin, 5 sonatas, 12 variations in C, 12 in F, and 7 in E-flat for piano and 'cello, 1 sonata for piano and horn, 7 books of variations for piano and flute, 1 sonata, 3 marches, 8 variations in C and 6 in D for piano four hands, 38 sonatas for piano solo, 21 sets of variations for piano solo, 3 sets of bagatelles, 4 rondos, a fantasia, 3 preludes, a polonaise, an andante in F, 7 minuets, and 13 Ländlers for piano solo.

In speaking of the works of Beethoven I must again confine myself to the line of instrumental progress. Beethoven was always great. "Fidelio," his one opera, is a sombre work, but the music never fails to impress itself upon the mind as that of a master, laboring in an unfamiliar field. It stands alone. No one else ever wrote an opera like it. It belongs to no school and it has had no imitators. Beethoven's one oratorio is also plainly a master's work, but here again he was not in his element. The tremendous breadth

and depth of the man's moral nature are shown better in his *Missa Solemnis*, in which, as Dr. Marx has well said, Beethoven erected for himself an eternal cathedral. Some of its numbers are among the sublimest creations of the human intellect. It is in the domain of the sonata, however, that Beethoven towers above all other composers before or since his time; and we may well doubt whether the next five centuries will produce anything that can dispute with his majestic sonatas for piano and for orchestra the supremacy in absolute music.

Beethoven's music is divided by Herr von Lenz into three styles, and this arrangement has gained wide acceptance. The first style shows distinct traces of the influence of Haydn and Mozart, though the individuality of the new genius breaks forth frequently. The first and second symphonies belong to this style, though there are passages in their scherzos which might have been written years later than they were. His early piano sonatas and his first piano concerto belong to this period also. Then comes a transition, marked by the Kreutzer sonata, the C minor piano concerto, and the *Eroica* symphony, after which the master entered his period of maturity, when his works are all individual, characteristic, and charged with enormous

strength. To this period belong "Fidelio" and its four epoch-making overtures, the mass in C, the symphonies from No. 4 to No. 8, inclusive, the "Coriolanus" overture, the "Egmont" music, the piano concertos in G and E-flat, the violin concerto, the Rassomouffsky quartets, and those in E-flat and F minor, the three later pianoforte trios, and a dozen of his piano sonatas, including the D minor and the "Appassionata." The third style, according to Sir George Grove's admirable article in his "Dictionary of Music," began in 1814, when Beethoven's life entered upon a series of sorrows and misfortunes that filled his soul with bitterness and an unspeakable yearning for eternal rest. To this period belong the majestic ninth symphony, the five piano sonatas, op. 101 to 111, and the last quartets, op. 127 to 135. As Grove wisely says, the ninth symphony differs from its predecessors "not only in dimensions and in the use of the chorus, but in elevation and sentiment and in the total impression produced." The piano sonatas display "a certain wistful yearning, a sort of sense of the invisible and vision of the infinite, mingled with their power." The last quartets resemble the sonatas in character, "but they are also longer, full of changes of time, less observant than before of the traditional forms of

expression, less careful to make obvious the links of connection, and still more full of intense personality and of a wild unimprisoned spirit." In these last works Beethoven becomes something more than a composer; he is a great moral power. As Mr. Edward Dannreuther has said: "He passes beyond the horizon of a mere singer and poet, and touches upon the domain of the seer and the prophet; where, in unison with all genuine mystics and ethical teachers, he delivers a message of religious love and resignation, identification with the sufferings of all living creatures, depreciation of self, negation of personality, release from the world."

The first two symphonies give but faint indications of the future prophet. In the Eroica the master spirit is first revealed in the tone-picture of a hero fighting for victory. In the B-flat, No. 4, we meet with the first of Beethoven's subjective symphonies, and get the first orchestral representation of his inner life. In the sublime No. 5, in C minor, we are presented with a great tone poem depicting the struggle of an entire people for liberty and the final triumph. The plan of the Pastoral was made known by the master's programme. The seventh and eighth are joyous and happy, the seventh, according to Wagner, being the apotheosis of the

dance. In the ninth we are brought face to face with the loftiest outstretchings of the human soul.

From the spiritual essence of Beethoven's works in the sonata field let us now turn for a time to the form. The master made innovations in the sonata form which resulted in its being carried to its highest and probably its most perfect possible development. In the first place he largely increased the range of keys used in a sonata. It was the practice of his predecessors to confine themselves to narrow limits, always answering a first theme in the tonic by a second theme in the dominant. If the first theme was minor the second was in the relative major. The second movement of the sonata was nearly always in the subdominant. Beethoven followed his predecessors to a considerable extent in the relation of the first and second themes of the first movement. In 26 piano sonatas he changes to the dominant 17 times, to the mediant, 3, and the submediant, 3. In the relations of the keys of the different movements, however, he departed much further from the ways of Haydn and Mozart. In 81 compositions in the sonata form he passes to the dominant but 3 times, to the subdominant 19 times, to the mediant 4 times, and to the submediant

30 times. From tonic major to tonic minor he changes 12 times and from minor to major 8 times.

Beethoven abolished the intermediate periods used by his predecessors between their first and second subjects. Mozart and Haydn separated their subjects by passages not related to them. Beethoven constructed the passages by which he advanced from one theme to another by material directly made out of the first theme. Thus his works gained immeasurably in symmetry and logical coherence.

In the Eroica symphony we find some of Beethoven's widest departures from the strict plans of his predecessors. But he must not be accused of a wanton desire to alter the old forms. He was forced to write as he did by the desire to say something which could not be expressed in the old way.* In what is known as

* This same desire for larger means of expression led him to gradually increase the orchestra. We have seen what Mozart's orchestra consisted of; now let us look at Beethoven's. In the first and second symphonies he used violins, violas, 'cellos, basses, two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns and tympani, thus beginning where Mozart left off. In the third he added another horn. The fourth has the same instruments as the first two. The last movement of the fifth adds a piccolo, contrabassoon, and three trombones. The Pastoral is written for strings, wood, and two horns. The orchestra of the seventh and eighth is

the "working out" portion of the first movement of the *Eroica* he has introduced a new subject as important as anything preceding it. This symphony also contains a coda of 140 bars, which is in effect an independent member of the movement. In his later quartets Beethoven grew more bold in his treatment of form. His thoughts were too great for restraint and he spoke with the free eloquence of irresistible impulse. The ninth symphony and his last piano sonatas, however, are strictly in form.

So far as the outward shape of the symphony is concerned, the alteration most noticeable to the general hearer is Beethoven's introduction of the scherzo in place of the minuet. This was really a creation. The third movement of a symphony by Haydn or Mozart was always a minuet, and they made out of it all that could be made out of a dance tune pure and simple. The "menuetto" of Beethoven's first symphony is less like a minuet than like a scherzo. It is the first foreshadowing of those magnificent and characteristic movements that form the third parts of the third, fifth, seventh, and ninth sym-

the same as that of the first and second. In the ninth he employs (in parts) the full conventional modern orchestra : Two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, one contra bassoon, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tympani, and strings.

phonies, the sonata, opus 106, and the first of the Rassomouffsky quartets.

One small, but peculiar, feature of Beethoven's style I wish to mention here; that is, the fact that so many of his melodies consist of consecutive notes. It is simply marvellous to notice what tremendous effects this man could get out of a mere scale. Some of the noblest themes he has written are constructed in this manner, such as the scherzo and finale of the ninth symphony, that of the choral fantasia, the slow movements of the B-flat symphony and B-flat trio, the adagio to the quartet, opus 127, and others. It is related of him that he once improvised a finished composition on a theme, given him by Vogel, which consisted of the scale of C major, three bars, alla breve (two minims to a bar). He followed the same plan in the minuet of the first symphony, using the scale of G major.



Beethoven wrote variations often, and he wrote them as no other master ever has done, either before or since his time. As Grove says: "His favorite plan is to preserve the harmonic

basis of the theme and to modify and embellish the melody." In another and higher form of his variations "everything undergoes a change — rhythm, melody, and harmony—and yet the individual theme remains clearly present." This is really a species of thematic development, something new being openly and visibly manufactured out of prepared material. "In no other form than that of the variation," says Edward Dannreuther, "does Beethoven's creative power appear more wonderful, and its effect on art more difficult to measure."

Beethoven has been often criticised as the inventor of music with labels attached to it—in other words, "programme music." This is not true. Bach left a sonata describing the departure of his brother. There are also two symphonies by Knecht, with programme titles, which resemble Beethoven's "Pastoral" in style. Beethoven wrote a number of programme compositions, of which the chief is the pastoral symphony. In the programme of the concert of December 22, 1808, at which this work was made known, the composer published the title as follows: "Pastoral Symphonie : mehr Ausdruck der Empfindung als Malerei"—"more an expression of emotion than portraiture." This is proof positive that the great

master had considered the true use and aim of programme music.

It is hardly necessary, in these days, to enter into any account of the æsthetic value of Beethoven's music. His supremacy has long been acknowledged, and the world admits that he is one of its moral teachers. I can offer no better tribute to the master of absolute music than by quoting once more from the fine words of Mr. Edward Dannreuther: "While listening to such works as the overture to 'Leonora,' the Sinfonia Eroica, or the Ninth Symphony, we feel that we are in the presence of something far wider and higher than the mere development of musical themes. . . . A religious passion and elevation are present in the utterances. The mental and moral horizon of the music grows upon us with each renewed hearing. The different movements—like the different particles of each movement—have as close a connection with one another as the acts of a tragedy, and a characteristic significance to be understood only in relation to the whole; each work is in the full sense of the word a revelation. Beethoven speaks a language no one has spoken before, and treats of things no one has dreamt of before; yet it seems as though he were speaking of matters long familiar, in one's mother tongue; as

though he touched upon emotions one had lived through in some former existence. . . . The warmth and depth of his ethical sentiment is now felt all the world over, and it will ere long be universally recognized that he has leavened and widened the sphere of men's emotions in a manner akin to that in which the conceptions of great philosophers and poets have widened the sphere of men's intellectual activity."

Wherever the works of Beethoven have been played and their spirit comprehended, I think there cannot be one moment's dissent from these admirable lines. Let me now say a few words in regard to Beethoven's relation to his successors. Two schools have claimed the mighty Ludwig. As Naumann remarks: "He represents the consummation of two phases of the tonal art—the classic and the romantic—and both sections clamorously insist that he is the ideal embodiment of their special tendencies." One book has already been written on this topic, and I am not going to write another. But a few words must be said in regard to it. And a few words must first be said in regard to the romantic school. The opinion has been expressed that all the instrumental composers since Beethoven were mere tone-colorists. The absurdity of this statement is self-evident to all

who are acquainted with the works of the six great lights of the romantic school—Weber, Schubert, Chopin, Schumann, Liszt, and Wagner. I am compelled to include Liszt because he invented a new form, and to omit Berlioz for reasons which will be given. Now what is the spiritual essence of the romantic school? Its masters have been much abused for their violence, self-assertion, stormy passion, disregard of musical law, and tremendous demands upon the intellects of their hearers. The distinctive quality of the music of this school is its subjectivity. It produces introspective music. It looks into the soul, and undertakes not exactly to picture what passes there, but to produce in the hearer a similar train of emotions. It strives not so much to represent to the mind the beauty and grandeur of the world as to lead the mind into the condition which that beauty and grandeur ought to produce. But it goes still further. In the domain of absolute music the romantic school seeks to build an invisible bond between the soul of the composer and that of the hearer, so that both shall experience the same emotions. Music cannot definitely express emotion; but it can produce it, and to open a certain channel of emotional experience through which the hearer shall enter into the same current of thought and

feeling as the composer has passed through in the construction of his work is the aim of the modern school of romantic music. In opera the principle is the same, but the application different. The composer here seeks to place the hearer under the spell of the emotions of his characters, not of himself. No means that can lead to these ends are neglected. Sometimes we have a mystic and indefinite style, as in Chopin's works; again, where the emotional conditions are less complex, and more completely the result of external influence, we have the purest of material tone-painting, as in the "Waldweben" of *Siegfried*.*

Now I hold that Beethoven is as truly the father of the romantic school as he was the culmination of the classic. He bade farewell to objective music when he wrote the C-minor symphony, and in the ninth he indubitably proclaimed himself an exponent of the internal world. The tendency of all truly great composers since his time has been toward subjectivity, toward introspection. Whenever you hear a modern composition in which there appears to you to be something lacking, with which you

* I must not be misunderstood here. I do not refer to *Siegfried's* whole scene in the forest, but solely to the instrumental passage known as the "Waldweben."

do not find yourself moved, and with whose spirit you do not feel that you can become *en rapport*, be sure that one of two things is true: Either the composer has failed to construct his composition in strict accord with a natural series of emotional conditions, or he has constructed it without any genuine emotion at all.

Mendelssohn has been classed as a romantic composer, and it is beyond question that his work shows the influence of that school. But the distinguishing qualities of his work are refinement, elegance, grace, and tastefulness, and an adherence to classic form. On the other hand, Schubert has been set down as a classical composer; but I fail to perceive how anyone can hear "Der Erl-König" or "Der Wanderer" without recognizing that in this man's especial field, the art song, he was unquestionably a romanticist of the highest order. Schumann and Chopin were of the romantic school by the irresistible force of their own natures. Schumann made no new forms, but he never wrote a phrase that did not seek to convey certain emotions from his own soul to that of his hearer. Chopin's romanticism is beyond doubt, and his marvellous originality is equally so. I think no one but Wagner has surpassed him in originality. As for Liszt, I can only say for him that while

he seems to me to be undoubtedly the weakest of the romanticists, and the one most certainly destined to oblivion, he has a claim to some honor for having invented their one distinctive form—the symphonic poem. This new thing in music is based upon the postulate that there is no break in a succession of emotional states. It, therefore, discards the symphonic succession of separated movements, and endeavors to present a closely connected, uninterrupted train of emotions appropriate to a series of events already made known to the hearer by a poem, story, or play. It is not, or ought not to be, the object of the composition to tell the story. That is attempting to go beyond the domain of music. The composition should aim at the transfer of emotion from the composer to the hearer. The best of Liszt's symphonic poems is "Les Préludes," which has no story at all. I can only add here that the greatest symphonic poems have yet to come. A step toward them has been made by Philip Scharwenka in his noble fantasia for orchestra, "Liebesnacht." The composer does not call it a symphonic poem, but it is one.

The reason why Liszt's symphonic poems are not great is that they descend too frequently into a mere material representation of externals.

Berlioz, Rubinstein, Raff, and others of the same calibre in the romantic school miss greatness from this same lack of spirituality. I feel sure that the judgment of the future will allot these men a distinctive position as accomplished tone-colorists, as talented musical landscape painters, while it will acknowledge the others as poets of the soul. Richard Wagner is the solitary composer since Beethoven who has shown the wide ability to embrace a complete mastery of external representation and internal revelation. The standard of composition set up by Beethoven when he proclaimed that his *Pastoral symphony* was rather an expression of emotion than mere portraiture is the true one for programme music. The outward world is to be absorbed by the soul and its effect upon the spirit is to be revealed by music. Beyond programme music, however, stand the illimitable realms of absolute music without programme and of the music-drama. In these departments the entire psychic experience of humanity is offered to the composer. There is an illimitable supply of inspiration for the symphonist through constant study and revelation of his own emotional life, and for the music-dramatist in projecting the results of that study by the aid of the imagination upon a dramatic canvas. The transcen-

dent genius of Beethoven has convinced the entire world that the supreme language of the soul is music. He was the master epic poet of the tonal art. He was the Milton of music, just as Wagner was the Shakespeare—the one unequalled in the epic field, the other unapproached in the dramatic. The future may produce a composer of absolute music who will surpass Beethoven in expression ; it cannot produce one who will surpass him in the length and breadth and depth of his ethical revolution in our art. The world of fashion still demands, as it always has, that music should be nothing but a “concourse of sweet sounds.” In the presence of Beethoven, as in the presence of Wagner, the worshippers of Mammon stand abashed. The tinsel and the glare of frivolity fall before the solemn majesty of this celestial spirit.

Centuries were required for the manufacture of our musical materials. Then came the long series of composers, terminating with Haydn, who were engaged in the elaboration of a standard instrumental form. Haydn established it, and used it as a medium for the publication of his clear, genial ideas, which had chiefly their pleasant humor and euphonious melody to commend them. Mozart improved the form, and employed it for the expression of a variety of

moods, which were never so overwhelming in power as to cause him to sacrifice to them the clearness and symmetry of the form and the rounded beauty of his melody. Beethoven removed the one weak part of the form, the minuet, and substituted the scherzo; and he employed the now perfect whole as a medium for the expression of the great, tragic, elemental feelings of his kind, the love, the passion, the fierce joy, and the measureless woe of man. He made his symphony the "cry of the human," and the obtrusiveness of the form, together with the individuality of the composer, is swallowed up in the universality of the divine thoughts. We cannot do better than pause here, with the last words of Richard Wagner's splendid essay on Beethoven: "Let us then celebrate the great pathfinder in the wilderness of the degenerated Paradise. But let us celebrate him worthily . . . for to the benefactor of the world still belongs the precedence before the world-conqueror."

CHAPTER VI.

THE FIRST OPERATIC REFORMATION.

We considered music, in the concluding part of the last chapter, as the medium of human emotion. In its absolute form we saw the tonal art reach the magnificent elevation of the Beethoven symphony, and we were of the opinion that not for many years, perhaps centuries, would it rise to loftier heights. The recent productions of Wagner and of Verdi are grounds for the belief that the most important developments of music in the future will be in the domain of opera. To view our art in its business relations, the opera offers far more dazzling inducements to the composer than any other department of composition. Success, when attained, is more swift, more brilliant, more universal, and more profitable. It is reasonable to expect, then, that the majority of composers, having the successful reformatory achievements of Wagner as an incentive and a guide, will fol-

low the path which he has pointed out rather than seek to build symphonies after the unapproachable manner of Beethoven. An opera much less admirable than the least noble of Wagner's will repay its composer in fame and wealth far more than a fine symphony. This is not art; it is business.

I desire now to trace briefly the growth of opera down to the present period. We reviewed its foundation in the second chapter. You are now to see that the history of opera has been a series of contests for supremacy between true dramatic composition and vocal technique—a war that will end in peace only by the establishment of an indissoluble confederation between the contending parties. You have seen that the inventors of opera sought to reproduce the true musical declamation of the Greeks. The cultivation of singing and the public admiration for brilliant vocal accomplishments speedily led to the obscurement of the true purpose of opera, and composers were forced to write for the singers. Gluck, as we shall see, made the first determined stand against the supremacy of the singer, and, after a stormy struggle, convinced the world that operas of true dramatic significance and absolute tonal beauty could be written. Mozart's labors were not reformatory, but his best works are examples

of genuine dramatic opera. But again Italy, with its matchless voices and superb vocal methods, came to the front, and the triumph of vocal technique over dramatic truth culminated in the works of Bellini and Donizetti and the early productions of Verdi. Then arose the latest genius whose devotion to honest art compelled him to seek once again for the true dramatic recitative; and in the works of Wagner we have it revealed to us in a new form, but with the old spirit. And now Verdi, the most gifted of Italy's later composers, a man whose position in musical history cannot yet be established, though it is unquestionably underestimated by the German extremists—Verdi has thrown over the entire apparatus of the old Italian system and has written operas in which he has striven to impart true dramatic significance to the arioso style. This is the first effort of the kind that has been made in Italy since the days of Claudio Monteverde, and I regard it as a matter of great importance.

Let us go back now, and briefly review the history of opera down to the period of Gluck's labors. We have seen how Monteverde labored to make the music of his operas a truthful illustration of the text. He spared no labor that could conduce to this end. His development of

instrumental resources was surprising at that early period. He strove to make use of the characteristic qualities of the various instruments and introduced innovations which so astounded the members of his orchestra that they refused to play them. Among these were the pizzicato and the tremolo of stringed instruments. We have seen how Italian opera immediately after Monteverde's death began to descend from its high purposes. We have seen how Alessandro Scarlatti, an accomplished singer and a celebrated teacher, wrote for the singer rather than the poet. The singer speedily became the chief power in Italian opera. It was not the composition the public went to hear, but the vocalist; and everything was done to give the principal singers opportunities to display their powers. The course of vocal training was something that would appall an ambitious soprano of to-day. The following story I quote *verbatim* from the pages of Fetis' "Music Explained to the World."

"Porpora, one of the most illustrious masters of Italy, conceived a friendship for a young pupil, and asked him if he had courage to persevere with constancy in the course which he should mark out for him, however wearisome it might seem. Upon his answering in the affirmative,

the master noted, upon a single page of ruled paper, the diatonic and chromatic scales, ascending and descending, the intervals of third, fourth, fifth, etc., in order to teach him to take them with freedom, and to sustain the sounds, together with trills, groups, appoggiaturas, and passages of vocalization of different kinds.

"This page occupied both the master and scholar during an entire year, and the year following was also devoted to it. When the third year commenced, nothing was said of changing the lesson, and the pupil began to murmur; but the master reminded him of his promise. The fourth year slipped away, the fifth followed, and always the same eternal page. The sixth year found them at the same task, but the master added to it some lessons in articulation, pronunciation, and lastly in declamation. At the end of this year the pupil, who still supposed himself in the elements, was much surprised when his master said to him: 'Go, my son; you have nothing more to learn; you are the first singer of Italy, and of the world.' He spoke the truth, for this singer was Caffarelli."

Though this story is an exaggeration, it illustrates the fact that there was little question of dramatic ability, of intellectual elevation. Not much was required of the singer beyond the

most marvellous vocal accomplishments ; and when we examine the prodigiously difficult ornamental passages sung with ease by the famous male sopranists Caffarelli, Farinelli, and Senesino, we realize that vocal art in the early part of the eighteenth century attained a state of perfection which it has never reached since that time. The inevitable result of this surprising vocal perfection was that the singer became monarch of the operatic realm, and the composer was relegated to a secondary place—precisely the conditions which the extreme opponents of Wagner are demanding to-day. During the greater part of the eighteenth century the composer was under iron rules. He could not even distribute the voices as he chose. The proper number of persons for an opera was six—three women and three men. And the men were always either sopranists or tenors. If a fourth man was introduced in an opera, he was permitted to be a bass. In Händel's "Teseo" all the principal singers were sopranos and contraltos ; there was no baritone, bass, or tenor.

Furthermore, the forms of the arias were laid down by the law of custom. The opera-goers knew the rules and resented any attempt at innovation. These arias were divided into five classes ; though each had a first and second part,

and Da Capo. The five different brands of musical fireworks were the *aria cantabile*, the *aria di portamento*, the *aria di mezzo carattere*, the *aria parlante*, and the *aria di bravura*. The *aria cantabile* was a slow movement with a touch of pathos. The *aria di portamento* was also slow, but it possessed a more measured style and a more symmetrical melody than the former kind. The *aria parlante* had a declamatory character and was suitable to moments of dramatic passion. The *aria di bravura* was of the familiar "Lucia" mad-scene style and was intended simply to display the singer's agility. Further laws of the time required that every scene in an opera should end with an aria. Each principal singer was entitled to one aria in each act; but no vocalist was allowed to sing two arias in succession, nor might two arias of the same style succeed one another, though allotted to different performers. In the second and third acts the hero and the heroine were each entitled to one grand scena followed by an *aria di bravura*. Moreover, the same two persons had to be supplied with one grand duo. The third act—the last—ended with a chorus and dance. No trios, quartets, or other concerted numbers were permitted; and I cannot see how they could be, for the singer who had the principal part would

have been promptly murdered by those who could not have it.

No wonder that the mighty genius of Händel found the operatic climate uncongenial and refused to flourish in it. I do not mean to say that there is not much fine music in Händel's operas. That would be a foolish statement. Händel was too honest an artist not to see the folly of the operatic system of his day. He strove to break the barriers set up by the absurd rules of the time ; but it was impossible for him single-handed to conquer the power of popular singers and public prejudice. The great soprano Senesino quarrelled with Händel and went over to the opposition, which also secured Farinelli. Händel was forced to retire from the field of opera. Yet we can only wonder what these singers expected ; for surely no composer of that time in England could have written for them better arias with more opportunities for display than Händel. But he had the temerity in some of his works to write two arias in succession for one singer, and to introduce quartets. The princely potentates of song exiled him from the domain of opera ; and he found an everlasting revenge in becoming the composer of the immortal "Messiah."

The labors of Alessandro Scarlatti were, to a

large extent, contemporaneous with those of Händel, and his pupils spread his methods and style abroad. Leonardo Leo (1694–1746) and Francesco Durante (1684–1755) were two of his most noted disciples, while Nicola Piccini (1724–1800) carried Scarlatti's style into France and competed against Gluck with no small success. The Neapolitan school of opera-writers, founded by Scarlatti, lasted till the beginning of the present century and numbered among its masters such men as Pergolesi, Jomelli, Sacchini, Paisiello, and Cimarosa. In Rome, Bologna, and Venice such writers as Steffani, Lotti, Marcello, and Buononcini cultivated the Neapolitan style, and even in Germany it was supreme. In Vienna Johann Joseph Fux (1660–1732), who wrote a celebrated theoretical treatise called *Gradus ad Parnassum*, was the chief spirit, while in Berlin there was Carl Heinrich Graun (1701–1759), in Munich, Johann Kaspar Kerl (1628–1693), and in Dresden, Johann Adolf Hasse (1699–1783). The German cities were full of Italian singers, conductors, and composers, and the entire continent of Europe was expending its musical talent on the cultivation of the aria, which was held to be the central sun of the operatic system. Everything that we now regard as essential to dramatic truth was

then sacrificed to the desire for mere sweetness of sound and the overwhelming authority of the inflated singers. The Neapolitan style culminated in Rossini, of whom I shall have to speak later.

It was in 1762 that a German, Christopher Willibald Gluck, made the first determined stand against the prevalent style of opera. His battles might have been fought in vain had it not been for the tremendous influence of Jean Jacques Rousseau and his philosophy of enlightenment. Men had been so artificial in their ideas that the approved style of landscape gardening had been that in which the trees were clipped into fantastic forms instead of being permitted to assume their natural shapes. Rousseau and his followers preached what they called the gospel of nature. They carried their belief in the unrestrained exercise of impulse as far as their predecessors went in artificial restraint. It was this new philosophy that made the path clear for Gluck, and Rousseau was one of his firmest defenders. I need not enter into any account of the struggle of the great chevalier for recognition, nor need I tell you how he finally triumphed over Piccini, who was set up as his rival by the opposing party. You can read an account of this operatic war in any musical his-

tory or any biography of Gluck. What I wish to do is to call your attention to what Gluck's theories were and to his manner of applying them. The most direct and satisfactory method of doing this will be to quote some passages from the dedicatory epistle prefixed to the composer's "Alceste."

"I endeavored," he says, "to reduce music to its proper function, that of seconding poetry by enforcing the expression of the sentiment and the interest of the situations without interrupting the action, or weakening it by superfluous ornament. My idea was that the relation of music to poetry was much the same as that of harmonious coloring and well disposed light and shade to an accurate drawing, which animates the figures without altering their outlines. . . . My idea was that the overture ought to indicate the subject and prepare the spectators for the character of the piece they are about to see; that the instruments ought to be introduced in proportion to the degree of interest and passion in the words; and that it was necessary above all to avoid making too great a disparity between the recitative and the air of a dialogue, so as not to break the sense of a period or awkwardly interrupt the movement and animation of a scene. I also thought that my

chief endeavor should be to attain a grand simplicity; and consequently I have avoided making a parade of difficulties at the cost of clearness."

You will understand from these passages that Gluck's creed was, that the office of music was not simply to please the ear, but to minister to the intellect; and he saw that in the lyric drama the only way to do this was by making his music faithfully illustrate the text. In short, he went back to the principles laid down by Jacopo Peri, the founder of opera; but he reinforced these laws with the improved material of an advanced stage of musical art. His reforms in opera were as radical as those of Wagner. The Italian opera of his time had just as little honesty of art and sincerity of dramatic purpose as that of Donizetti, Bellini, and Rossini. Gluck's predecessors wrote for the singers. Gluck wrote for the poet, and never sacrificed dramatic significance to vocal display, nor wrote tune for tune's sake only. Yet his operas are full of truly inspired melodies, such as the famous "Che faro," and his instrumentation lifted the orchestra to an importance in opera previously unthought of. His sweeping changes met with quite as much opposition as those of Wagner. The public had learned to regard the opera as a place

of fashionable amusement, and resented any attempt to restore it to its rightful position as a serious art form. But Gluck's triumph was complete, and his principles were acknowledged by all thinking people to be the true ones.*

Gluck's "Orfeo," which still holds the stage, was produced in Vienna, in 1762, and one of the features which astonished the opera-goers of that city was the appearance of the chorus as a factor in the action of the work, and not as a mere musical background. The original score bears the significant title, "Orfeo, Drama per Musica in due Atti," the old title *Opera Seria*, being purposely laid aside. In "Alceste," produced in 1767, the music was still more serious, and no concessions were made to the popular taste of the day. The opponents of the reformatory music bitterly complained that they were compelled to pay two florins "to be passionately excited and thrilled instead of

* You are not to infer from this that old-fashioned opera died and had to be resuscitated. The majority of the human race does not like to think, but prefers to be amused; and so the composers of ear-tickling and meaningless music continued to flourish. Cimarosa (1749-1801) wrote Italian comic operas, which were somewhat better than those of his predecessors because he made effective use of concerted numbers, which he wrote with taste and judgment.

being amused." Gluck's "Iphigénie in Aulide" was produced in Paris in 1774, and his "Iphigénie in Tauride" in 1779. A complete triumph of his principles among intellectual people followed.

"Gluck's place in musical history is peculiar and well-marked," says one of his biographers. "He entered the field of operatic composition when it was hampered with a great variety of dry forms, and utterly without soul and poetic spirit. The object of the composers seemed to be to show mere contrapuntal learning, or to furnish singers opportunity to display vocal agility. The opera, as a large and symmetrical expression of human emotions, suggested in the collisions of a dramatic story, was an utterly unknown quantity in art. Gluck's attention was early called to this radical inconsistency; and though he did not learn for many years to develop his musical ideas according to a theory, and never carried that theory to the logical results insisted on by his great after-type, Wagner, he accomplished much in the way of sweeping reform. He elaborated the recitative or declamatory element in opera with great care, and insisted that his singers should make this the object of their most careful efforts. The arias, duos, quartets, etc., as well as the choruses and

orchestral parts, were made consistent with the dramatic motive and situations. In a word, Gluck aimed with a single-hearted purpose to make music the expression of poetry and sentiment."

CHAPTER VII.

FROM MOZART TO VERDI.

We now come to Mozart, whose chief works are "Idomeneo," "Cosi fan tutte," "La Clemenza di Tito," "Le Nozze di Figaro," and "Don Giovanni," all Italian operas, and "Die Entführung aus dem Serail" and "Die Zauberflöte," German operas. Mozart in early life made himself a consummate master of counterpoint, and when he came to write his great operas, this study was of immense advantage to him; for it enabled him not only to write concerted pieces better than they had ever been written before, but to develop the orchestral accompaniment wonderfully. His genius for melody was supplemented by an instinctive appreciation of the dramatic significance of a situation to which he was never untrue. The result was that he was able to produce melodies which were at once beautiful and faithful to the meaning of the text.

It is generally conceded that Mozart's weaker works owe their inferiority to the wretched libretti. The dramatic instinct of the man was so strong that, while he wrote in conventional forms, his inspiration was under the direct control of the text. On this point nothing better can be said than Richard Wagner's remark : "Oh, how inexpressibly I prize and honor Mozart in that he found it impossible to write the same kind of music for 'Titus' as for 'Don Juan,' for 'Cosi fan Tutte' as for 'Figaro!' How music would have been debased thereby! A sprightly, frivolous poet handed him his airs, duets, and ensembles to compose, and according to the warmth with which they inspired him, he set them to the music which would endow them with the fullest amount of expression that they were capable of."

He did not disdain to make use of the forms of earlier writers, but he imbued the concerted number, developed by Cimarosa, and the finale, raised to importance by Piccini, with dramatic significance, while at the same time he elaborated them in a new and surprising manner. The two concerted finales in "Le Nozze di Figaro" contain respectively nine and seven movements, and those in "Don Giovanni" eleven; yet these are so joined that they form a complete

and symmetrical whole like the movements of a Beethoven symphony. His instrumentation made the orchestral accompaniment wonderfully rich in expression. Grétry, the French composer, told Napoleon that Cimarosa placed his statue on the stage and his pedestal in the orchestra, while Mozart placed the statue in the orchestra and the pedestal on the stage; thereby signifying that Cimarosa knew how to construct an opera better than Mozart. I do not know what M. Grétry would have said about a Wagner music drama, but the world has expressed its opinion of his comparison of Cimarosa and Mozart by forgetting the former and continuing to love and reverence the latter. Mozart did not use his orchestra simply as a means of support for the voices; he gave it a part in the illustration of the text. His accompaniments are thoroughly in keeping with the spirit of the scene, though we do not always hear them performed as he wrote them. His admirable use of the trombones to accompany the recitative of the statue in "Don Giovanni" is one of his best examples of instrumental effect; but we do not quite appreciate it when we have heard the thunder of trombones, not called for by Mozart, in all the previous forte passages.

Through his skill in writing for the human

voice Mozart proved himself the master of all contemporaneous and previous Italian opera composers in their own special department; for he showed that it was possible to write music that should be at once singable and dramatically truthful. Mozart did not aspire to be a reformer, like Gluck; but his divine genius and his unfailing dramatic intuitions forced him to fill the old forms with new meaning. He studied the Italian art of song thoroughly, and though we occasionally find numbers in his operas that lean toward mere virtuosity, owing to the fact that he sometimes wrote to meet the demands of the singers, they are never frivolous nor empty, but always good music. He took the extant Italian aria and put a soul into it. In his concerted pieces every character has its own distinctive melody, and all are woven together with masterly contrapuntal skill. The salient characteristics of Mozart's Italian operas are their truthful and varied expression of human nature in all its aspects; and this is wholly achieved by the music, for Mozart used the libretto merely as a skeleton which he covered with flesh and imbued with spirit.*

* I have spoken elsewhere of the possibilities that were in Mozart's genius, had he lived longer. His widow died in 1842. "Der Freischütz" was produced in 1821. Suppose Mozart had

He lifted German opera to the same high plane of excellence. His "Die Entführung aus dem Serail" is a work in which he applied to the German lyric stage the same methods as he had already applied to the Italian. He followed this work with "Der Schauspieldirektor," and later with "Die Zauberflöte," an opera whose music ranks among the finest ever written, but which is sadly marred by its inane libretto.

Mozart's treatment of the orchestra in this opera deserves especial notice. Jahn says: "It is not, as in 'Figaro' and 'Don Giovanni,' employed for delicate details of characterization, nor is it, as in 'Così fan Tutte,' replete with euphonious charm. It has here a double part: in that portion of the opera which represents purely human emotion the orchestra is free and independent in movement, but easy and simple in construction; while for the mystic element of the story it has quite another character. Unusual means, such as trombones and bassett-horns, are employed for the production of weird and unusual effects, while through all the

been living then and his genius had come under the influence of the romantic movement, what might he not have done? He would have been sixty-five years old. Verdi's "Aida" was produced when the composer was fifty-nine, and his "Otello" when he was seventy-four.

delicate gradations of light and shade, from melancholy gravity to brilliant pomp, the impression of dignity and solemnity is maintained and the hearer is transported to a sphere beyond all earthly passion. Not only are the hitherto unsuspected forces of the orchestra here brought into play, but its power of characterization is for the first time made fully manifest, and the ‘Zauberflöte’ is the point of departure for all that modern music has achieved in this direction.”

The particular importance of “*Die Zauberflöte*,” according to the same author, arises from its being the first German opera in which all the resources of art were brought to bear by a genius. “The influence which it has excited in the formation of German music can be disregarded by no one who has an eye for the development of art.”

Beethoven was never a slave to the glamour of the footlights. He probably would never have written an opera had not the managers of the Theatre an der Wien made him an offer to do so. Having accepted the offer the mighty Ludwig approached his labor, as he approached all musical production, in a spirit of intense devotion. The result was that though we now know that Beethoven was a symphonist rather than a lyricist, we might, had he written noth-

ing but "Fidelio" and its grand overtures, have regarded him as a second Gluck; for the conqueror of Piccini never produced an opera in which is shown greater devotion to dramatic truth. The theoretical principles upon which Beethoven's "Fidelio" is founded are precisely the same as those which underlie Gluck's "Alceste." In his mature works, however, Gluck often sacrificed beauty to dramatic expression; Beethoven, like Mozart, was successful in combining the two. "Fidelio" has, therefore, become immortal.

"Fidelio" stands alone in its greatness in this period of operatic development, but we must pause a moment to consider the labors of Cherubini, an Italian composer identified with the French stage, who after writing in the meaningless fashion of his native land for years, produced in 1791 his "Lodoiska," in which he revealed himself in an entirely new light. He began now to write in a manner thoroughly original, but based on the theories of Gluck. Beethoven had a great admiration for Cherubini, and spoke of him as one of the greatest living writers for the stage. Cherubini's choice of subjects for operas was much like that of Beethoven, and this has been attributed to a similarity of ideas between the two composers. Certain it is that Cheru-

bini's really dramatic works are constructed on the same foundations as the operas of Lulli and Gluck, and were in the direct line of development of the French opera.

We have now reached the birth of the romantic movement in opera—that emotional upheaval which has given us “Der Freischütz,” “Euryanthe,” and the Nibelungen tetralogy. It is to Karl Maria von Weber that we owe this movement, though some writers are inclined to exalt the claims of Ludwig Spohr, who wrote “Faust,” “Jessonda,” and other operas. “Der Freischütz,” however, was the first work of the school that fully realized its ideals and was accepted by the public as a revelation. Naumann, in his history, draws a delightful picture of the manifest joy of the German music-lovers when they realized that a new opera had been written which was thoroughly German in spirit. They did not at first appreciate the importance of the new field of fancy which had been opened up by Weber.

The romantic element had made its appearance in German poetry early in the nineteenth century. The reading public was heartily tired of the pompous heroes of olden times, and when the poets took up the folk-lore of the people, with all its contrasting features of sim-

ple peasant life and weird beings of excited imaginations, its blue-eyed maidens and its headless horsemen, its peaceful valleys and its haunted mountains, the public welcomed with delight their picturesque reproductions of the offspring of the soil. It was not long before this new poetry found its fitting mate in music, whose broad command of dramatic effects was so suitable to the delineation of this imaginative world. Weber's "Der Freischütz" has been criticised as being so purely German in spirit as to lack the universality which is a necessary trait of a master work. The color of "Der Freischütz" certainly is local ; but the human traits depicted in it—the superstition, the hunger for supernatural assistance, the morbid imagination, and the elemental passions—are not confined to any nation nor to any age, but are as general as the human race. The plot of the opera consists of a very simple love story, surrounded by a network of supernatural incidents. The heroine is a simple-minded, pious maiden ; the hero an honest fellow, who is a type of the weak and superstitious peasant. *Caspar* is an unnatural man, the sort of dreadful person that the ignorant country people would expect a man to be who was in the habit of hob-nobbing with demons, flirting with witches, going to Walpur-

gis-night parties, and sleeping off the effects of his dissipation in the heart of the Black Forest. Weber has depicted the different personages of the drama in truly illustrative music. *Agatha's* measures convey to us a forcible idea of her purity and simplicity. *Max's* weakness and vacillation are noticeable at all times, while *Caspar's* unnatural recklessness rings through all his music. There is a fine distinction between the styles of the music allotted to the peasants and the Wild Huntsman's followers. The overture, too, is a masterpiece of instrumental description. In "Euryanthe" Weber revived the glories of chivalry and put before the world a romantic picture of mediæval pageantry. But you will find no lack of fidelity to nature in this opera. The incidents are as vital and actual through the composer's faithful musical exposition of them as if they had taken place yesterday. This is paying a high tribute to the genius of Weber, for no composer was ever hampered by worse rubbish than the libretto which that conceited and prudish old blue-stocking, Helmina von Chezy, manufactured out of the old legend called "Histoire de Gérard de Nevers et de la belle et verteuse Euryanthe, sa mie." Weber's music makes us cease to wonder at Beethoven's hailing him as a "devil of a fel-

low." Dramatic intensity and marvellous wealth of expressiveness are combined with delightful fluency of melody and symmetry of form. Indeed, the perfect manner in which the music fits the dramatic and undramatic situations of the opera has resisted all attempts at altering the libretto. I have already described the characteristics of the romantic school of music. It is only necessary to add that Weber was not only its first, but one of its brightest lights. From him all the succeeding composers of the school have drawn inspiration. Richard Wagner gladly acknowledged the debt he owed the composer of "*Der Freischütz*" and was proud to preside at the final interment of his remains in Dresden in 1844.

Of Spohr it is only necessary to say that his music presents one feature now prominent in the romantic school. I refer to the masterly command over the intricacies of chromatic and enharmonic modulations. Weber in the construction of his principal subjects and melodies confined himself largely to the diatonic scale. Spohr's manner led to richer forms of expression, which you will find are used with matchless skill and expressiveness in "*Tristan und Isolde*." Of the minor celebrities of the romantic German school, such as Marschner, Ernst

Theodor Hoffmann, and Lindpaintner it is not worth while to speak here, for they have been but followers of the greater mind of Weber. I need only point out to you that Carl Goldmark, whose "*Queen of Sheba*" and "*Merlin*" have been performed with success, is one of the familiar living representatives of the school. Arrigo Boito, by his "*Mefistofele*," has also established a claim to high rank, and there are others whom I will not pause to mention. Richard Wagner was the second great light among the romantics, being classed as one of the new romantic school ; but his manner differed so greatly from that of his predecessors that he may be said to constitute an entirely distinct wing of the romantic army. He is reserved for consideration in the next and last chapter.

Having thus disposed of Germany, let us return to Italy. At the first performance of Rossini's "*Barber of Seville*," Garcia, the great tenor, sang a Spanish song which did not please the audience, and Rossini proceeded the next day to make a change. Mr. H. Sutherland Edwards, well known as a writer on musical topics and as a biographer, says in his sketch of Rossini that this alteration gave him no trouble. "He simply transcribed," says Edwards, "for the solo voice the melody of the celebrated chorus which

had already figured first in ‘Ciro in Babilonia’ and afterward in ‘Aureliano in Palmira.’ Such was the origin of the beautiful ‘Ecco ridente il cielo,’ which he handed to Garcia as he wrote it, and which was sung the same evening. Those who believe in the absolute significance of music apart from words may be interested to hear that *Almaviva’s* charming love-song was, as first composed, a prayer—as a love-song, after all, may well be.”

If you will consider for a moment the effect of using the pilgrims’ chorus in “Tannhäuser” as a serenade, or *Siegmund’s* love-song as a chorus, you will not fail to perceive the immense gulf that separates the music drama of Richard Wagner from the opera of Rossini and his followers. Rossini spent the years in which he established his fame as a composer in writing music solely for the sake of effect. He composed tune for tune’s sake alone, and he was willing to hide a simple and agreeable air behind a glare of vocal pyrotechnics for the sake of affording some clever singer an opportunity to bring down the house. Nevertheless during these years he made many improvements in the technical resources of Italian opera, particularly in the orchestral department. He abolished from the Italian stage the old-fashioned recita-

tivo secco, and in his "Otello" produced a work with recitativo stromentato throughout. His instrumentation was a vast improvement on the work of his predecessors in Italy, and his employment of four horns and clarinets in "Semiramide" and other orchestral devices in the same opera were at the time revelations.

It is the fashion nowadays to decry Rossini, and I fully agree with those who hold that he was not a great genius. But it is folly to deny his extraordinary talent in the face of two such works as "Il Barbiere" and "William Tell." Rossini had rare comic power and his "Barber of Seville" is one of the brightest, most tuneful, and most amusing comic operas ever written. Moreover, its music is written with a view to dramatic expression, and for this reason the work has a vitality not possessed by some of the composer's more serious operas. Rossini's masterpiece, "William Tell," was produced in Paris, August 3, 1829, when the composer was thirty-seven years of age, and it failed so signally that, although he lived till 1868, Rossini never wrote another opera. The influence of the French school is shown in "William Tell." The overture is not a hodge-podge, as in his earlier operas, but a truly dramatic and significant prelude, as faithful in purpose, though by no means

as lofty in thought or execution, as any one of Wagner's introductions. You will find in this opera no more of the absurdities of the composer's first years, no hymn of thanksgiving set to a polonaise, no more cabalettas, no more Italian gallopades, no more commonplace worn-out phrases. There is a duet in the second act which is concert-room music, and the finale of the third act does not fit the situation ; but the work as a whole is a radical departure from the Italian opera style of its time. Rossini threw off the tinsel and glitter of his younger days and endeavored to produce something honestly dramatic, and though he did not succeed in attaining the "grand simplicity" of Gluck, he certainly gave the world a valuable opera. To us of the present day the chief faults of "William Tell" are its continuance of old forms essentially undramatic, such as the set trio or duet, the long protracted repetition of passages of text for the sake of vocal embellishment, and the occasional stoppage of the progress of not only the drama but also the music to admit the introduction of cadenzas. These things were the airs and graces of the old style of opera, but since we have decided once again that the opera should be a lyric drama, there is no excuse for their existence.

Rossini was the last great light of the Neapolitan school, unless you agree with the extreme Wagnerites and set down Verdi as an equally great offender. Donizetti and Bellini followed Rossini. Donizetti wrote nearly seventy operas, of which three are still performed much too frequently ("Lucia," "Lucrezia," and "La Favorita"). Mr. Sutherland Edwards narrates that when Donizetti's father finally consented to his becoming a professional musician, he presented his son with an ivory ink-eraser. "Donizetti," says Mr. Edwards, "never went to work without the paternal scraper by his side. The fluent composer, however, had no occasion to make use of it for scratching out notes; and it seems never to have occurred to him to strike out feeble passages, not to say entire pieces. What Donizetti's father should have given him was not a scraper, but a pair of scissors."

I cordially agree with Mr. Edwards. I even go further. I am compelled to express my belief that if Donizetti's father had presented his son matches with which to burn his operas as fast as they were written, the progress of true dramatic art on the lyric stage would have been freed from some of its most serious obstacles. For Donizetti wrote tune solely and simply for its own sake. He cared nothing whatever for

dramatic significance, and had no more conception of the serious nature of his art than an oyster. His biographers and the Italianissimi combat such views with great indignation ; but their arguments are feeble against the evidence of the operas themselves. The finest thing Donizetti ever wrote is the noted finale in "*Lucia*." As music separately considered it is unquestionably an excellent piece of work, and any one may hear it with pleasure when it is well sung in the concert-room. Considered in connection with the dramatic situation it is ridiculous. To ask us to believe that in an emotional crisis, such as would be brought about by the appearance of *Edgardo* at the signing of the contract, a large assemblage of persons, torn by conflicting passions, would stand still, and for six or eight minutes, in an elaborately artificial form of speech, harangue the audience, of whose existence they are supposed to be ignorant, is too much. But Donizetti does not stop there. In the next act he introduces to us *Lucia* demented, singing a slow waltz, covered all over with the most anxiously prepared and carefully executed fiorituri, which are always hailed by the hearers with demonstrations of ecstatic delight, causing the young lady to come forward, bowing and smiling, to do it all over again.

Contrast this episode with the incoherent and broken utterances of Shakespeare's *Ophelia* in her mad scene, her wandering, disconnected thoughts, pathetic fancies, and snatches of simple folk-song, and you see at once how far removed is the work of a charlatan like Donizetti from that of a true poet.

Before leaving this composer let me say that in his comic operas he shows to better advantage. "L'Elisir D'Amore" is a merry and agreeable work, in which the light and melodious music is by no means ill suited to the scenes. The same thing may be said of some of Donizetti's other comic operas; but he has no claims to rank with the great composers of opera. I promised at the beginning of this work to try to show you what each writer had contributed to the progress of our divine art. In speaking of Donizetti, however, I am compelled to show what he did to oppose that progress.

If all these things are true of Donizetti, what is to be said of the sugar-coated Bellini? Even Emil Naumann, a German, posing as an unbiassed historian, finds much to praise in Bellini's compositions. He says that this composer invested his cantilena with a breath of romance. To my mind it is redolent of nothing but effeminess.

nate melancholy. Bellini unquestionably wrote for the singer. Few tenors have been able to sing the music of the rôle which he wrote for the high-voiced Rubini in "Il Pirata." Again, Bellini was so anxious to make vocalization the prominent feature of his work that he reduced the orchestra to the position of a most humble and insignificant accompanist.

I have only this to say in leaving the school of Rossini: During its existence there was a marvellous growth of instrumental and vocal virtuosity. Now no truth is taught more forcibly by musical history than the fact that great virtuosity is an almost insurmountable obstacle to the progress of true art. The public loves to be surprised; and as soon as players or singers appear who can astound their hearers by remarkable feats of technical agility, the composer becomes a secondary personage and the music's poetry is consumed in its fireworks. The period in which Rossini, Donizetti, and Bellini were the three chief lights of the Italian school was that in which flourished those singers most distinguished for vocal facility since the days of Caffarelli and Farinelli. Among them I need mention only the sopranos Catalani, Pasta, Grisi, Persiani, Viardot, and Malibran, the contralto Alboni, the tenors Rubini and Duprez,

and the baritone Lablache. During the same period flourished also the violin virtuosi, Brunnelli, Viotti, and Paganini.

The last Italian composer of opera who has attained celebrity is still living, and so also is the last prominent French opera writer. It would be interesting and profitable to enter into an extended consideration of the causes which led to the production of so excellent a work as Gounod's "Faust," and to endeavor to estimate its place in the literature of the stage.

Gounod's masterpiece is a legitimate result of the general tendency of French opera since the days of Lulli and Rameau. The French school at its best has always sought to combine suave, flowing, and lofty melody, unhampered by vocal pyrotechnics of any sort, with dramatic expressiveness. Gluck and his successors, among them Méhul, firmly fixed this as the direction of French operatic music. Gounod's "Faust," while unquestionably sacrificing much to the desire to please the majority, nevertheless possesses dramatic continuity, and the music is admirably expressive of the somewhat sentimental book. There are passages in "Faust," unhappily too few, such as the death of *Valentine*, and *Marguerite's* scene with *Mephistopheles* in the cathedral, which seem to me to come nearer to

the ideal music drama than anything outside of the best scenes in Wagner's works. I believe that the secret of the opera's hold upon the public is to be found in the combination of agreeable melody with dramatic power, and it seems to me that the work fails to reach real greatness and a permanent influence on operatic art only because of Gounod's concessions to the tawdry sentimentality and uneducated musical demands of the masses. As it is it stands alone, and its possible influence on the progress of our art has been overcome by that of the more important recent work of Verdi.

The composer of "Nabuco" and of "Otello" was one and the same man, though one would hardly believe it from such evidence as is afforded by the two works. Verdi is another composer who spent a large part of his life in writing operas in the bad old-fashioned way, without any true artistic design, making music for the ear but not for the brain, and then in later years saw the error of his ways and proved to the world that he, too, could speak the accents of truth. Verdi's earlier operas, such as "Rigoletto" and "Ernani" display the existence of rare vigor and power, together with a most fruitful melodic invention. There are many scenes in the works of his first and sec-

ond periods which show the presence of genuine dramatic feeling, misplaced and distorted by devotion to undramatic traditions. Again in these earlier operas we find noise and confusion in the orchestra offered us in place of expressive instrumentation, and our ears are everywhere saluted with the worn-out elementary rhythms of the Italian stage. To my mind one of the worst operas ever written is "Il Trovatore." My objection to it is that it is a series of concert pieces, for whose execution the entire dramatic action is suspended. Yet these same concert pieces are full of melodic invention, they are eminently singable, and some of them have a certain vigor and warmth. It was when Verdi made his inventiveness, his vigor, and his warmth subservient to a genuine artistic purpose that he first revealed his great ability, and it is, therefore, as the composer of "Aida" and "Otello" that I prefer to consider him.

"Aida" is a work of rare power, and indeed some of its scenes are vital with the eloquence of something very like true genius. The melodies are no longer founded on the worn-out rhythms of the Italian stage. The harmonies are of the richest and most complex character. The vocal parts are written with unfailing dramatic force. And the instrumentation is far in advance of

anything before attempted in Italian opera. It is unquestionably Verdi's most inspired work, though not his most ambitious nor his most sincere. In "Aida" he does not abandon the old forms, but seeks to disguise them in original melodic and harmonic vesture and in a new reality of dramatic aspect. This opera, I hope, will hold its place on the stage long after some of Verdi's previous successful works are forgotten.

The future of opera is somewhat difficult to foresee at the present time. The world appears to be divided into two great operatic parties—the German and the Italian—and any person who has the cool audacity to proclaim himself an admirer of all that is good and an opponent of all that is evil in both is in a fair way to be treated with the bitter scorn and hatred which in these days always burst upon the head of an independent. Blind and servile partisanship is extremely fashionable, and he who out of self-respect or a devotion to the right sets himself upon a more worthy level, must be contented with frequent views of the outstretched finger of contempt and with frequent hearings of the statement that he is an intellectual pharisee. Therefore, all who went to hear Verdi's "Otello" with minds open to conviction can now confront

with great serenity those unhappy creatures whose opening words in all operatic discussions are inevitably some variation of the familiar interrogatory theme: "Under which king, Bezonian? Speak, or die."

"Otello" is the most important work which has come out of Italy in many years. Whether it is greater than "Aida," which upset all pre-conceived ideas of the musical advancement of Italy and reformed the world's opinion of the Maestro Verdi, it would not be easy to decide now. "Otello" is a new and comparatively unfamiliar work, while "Aida" is as well-known to us as "Die Walküre." When "Otello" has been thoroughly digested it may, perhaps, be profitable to enter into this comparison. At present all that concerns us is that "Otello" is undoubtedly a great work by a master who has thrown aside the restrictions of tradition and followed the advance of modern ideas toward dramatic truth.

The history of Verdi is the history of Italian opera in our time. He has been the leader and the representative man. While adopting all that he believes to be good in the modern dramatic opera and discarding all the empty formulas of days that are done, Verdi is still distinctively Italian in his style. Certain char-

acteristics of the Italian school, especially in the treatment of the vocal parts, are preserved in his latest work in such a manner as to prove that the composer, while accepting the theories of the new romantic school, had no desire to sacrifice his own individuality. I take pleasure in quoting on this point some sentences from the admirable article on this opera in Mr. H. E. Krehbiel's "Review of the New York Musical Season" (1887-1888). He says: "It is entirely an immaterial question whether or not Verdi owes the progress toward dramatic expression which 'Aida' and 'Otello' show to the influence of Wagner. The music of these two operas shows that at an age when most composers rest on their laurels Verdi began to study French and German masters. The fact shows a seriousness of purpose, a conviction of duty toward art, that has few parallels. . . . The score of 'Otello' discloses an honest, consistent, and, in some respects, most successful effort to realize the higher purposes which we associate with the conception of a real lyric drama. With this conception nationalism has nothing to do." While fully agreeing with Mr. Krehbiel, I realize—as he does, I think—that Verdi has seen the irrefutable force of some of Wagner's theories. He would be no intellectual giant if

he had not. The old forms are absent from 'Otello.' There are no preludes, no ritornelli, no cabaletti, and no set arias, save *Desdemona's* two lyrics, which are songs introduced as they might be in a play. The continuous flow of melody is sustained from the beginning to the end of each act. There are complete songs in "Otello" besides the two lyrics, but they are simply the rounded settings of finished speeches, written in melody that follows the meaning of the text like the art-songs of Schubert and Schumann.

The great difference between this opera of Verdi and the music-dramas of Wagner lies just here: With Verdi, singing remains always the chief feature of the work. He calls "Otello" a lyric drama, and that is a precise description of it. The orchestra, instead of being raised to a place of equal importance with the singers, is kept subservient to them. Yet it is lifted to higher prominence than it has ever before enjoyed in Italian opera. In no department of his art has the aged maestro made such astonishing advances as in orchestration. The score of "Otello" is filled with superb combinations, with most ingenious and agreeable designs of accompaniment, and with rich and significant passages in which the orchestra illustrates ac-

tions and emotions. Nothing that has been contrived by recent experts in instrumentation has escaped Verdi and he has shown that he, too, possesses inventive ability in this department.

But, as before said, the singing is the feature of the opera, and in this the work is distinctively Verdian. The maestro writes no more ornate passages for the display of vocal accomplishments. Fiorituri are banished forever, and the successful singer of *Gilda* or *Violetta* would hardly receive with gratitude the rôle of *Desdemona*. There is nothing of a symphonic character in "Otello," unless one chooses to regard the short orchestral announcement of the "Willow Song" as such. The opera is undeniably a drama fitted with music. There are no opportunities for the singers to indulge in extended individual glorification, yet every measure is thoroughly singable. But once more in the contest art has conquered meretricious display. The weakest part of the whole work is the scene of *Desdemona's* murder, in which Verdi has not quite equalled the demands of the drama.

This one blemish, however, is far from being sufficient to destroy the vitality of the whole opera. The eloquence of the orchestration, the rich harmony of the choral passages, the con-

tinued loftiness of the style, and the genuine earnestness and feeling of the music in its entirety, together with the forcible revelation of the composer's design to make every part of his work subservient to the dramatic purpose of the whole, impress the unprejudiced hearer with the belief that this is one of the masterpieces of our time.

That "Aida" and "Otello" will influence the future progress of Italian opera it is impossible to doubt. That the influence will be for good is equally beyond question. To say that Italian opera is dead, in the face of such recent productions as these, is folly. Let us hope rather that it has but entered on a new and truer life, in which the artistic aims and enthusiastic devotion of Jacopo Peri and Claudio Monteverde shall be revived.

CHAPTER VIII.

WAGNER AND THE OPERA OF OUR FUTURE.

Plato, who was not a humorist but a philosopher, held that fallen human nature must be purified by a course of mathematics. A wicked world has never shown a disposition to follow the suggestion of the Greek sage; but in music a regeneration, not unlike that which the human intellect would experience from a general application to ordinates and abscissas, determinants and quaternions, has come about through the labors of Richard Wagner. From the days of Vincenzo Galilei, Jacopo Peri, and Giulio Caccini, with their small knowledge of counterpoint and their large fund of originality and earnestness, aiming at what they believed was the method of the Greek dramatists, but what was rather the true *musica parlante*, or pure, declamatory recitative, to the time when Gluck felt called upon to take measures of reform in order to renew the dramatic significance of the opera,

almost lost through the folly and extravagances of the Italian composers, there was a long and discouraging descent in operatic art. But it was less depressing, taking into consideration the invaluable lessons which Gluck taught and the wisdom which lovers of music ought to have gained through experience, than the fall from "Orpheus" to "Lucia" and "La Sonnambula." Half a century ago Fétis, one of the most learned critics of the time, wrote: "One of the errors into which most persons commonly fall, when they attend the representation of a new opera, consists in confounding the ornaments, which the singers add to the melodies, with the melodies themselves, and in persuading themselves that the merit of the music consists in these ornaments. The foundation upon which these embroideries are placed frequently remains unperceived, even to such a degree that it happens to certain frequenters of a theatre not to recognize an air because it is sung in a different manner from that with which they were familiar. A slight degree of attention given to the structure of the phrases of melody will soon produce the habit of separating them from all the flourishes with which they are adorned by the singers; for these embellishments have no musical sense. When we applaud a singer to the utmost

for his mechanical skill, it is not because it gives us the slightest pleasure, but because it astonishes."

Art had certainly sunk low when a great critic was compelled to write like that. The opera had become the singer. Dramatic significance was discarded in order that in telling situations the prima donna might have opportunity to exhibit her skill in colorature singing, or the tenor to astonish the auditors with high chest tones. The same tendency was exhibited lately on the Italian stage. Lucia, crazed by a grief too great for words, sang *fiorituri* of the most elaborate character; and Manrico, called upon to rescue his mother from the flames, tarried to sing his high C, and to be called out several times, bowing and smiling, while his aged parent continued to roast unsuccored. In the course of years thoughtful persons wearied of this. It was time for a new reform, and the reformer came.

It will be necessary in this chapter to consider at some length the effect which the teachings of Richard Wagner have already had, in order that we may estimate their probable influence on the future. The question has become very pertinent whether everything that goes to make up what we somewhat loosely denominate Italian opera is to be wiped from the face of the earth and the

theories and practice of Wagner to be the model of the hereafter. "Every reform," says Emerson, "was once a private opinion, and when it shall be a private opinion again, it will solve the problem of the age." Will the private opinions of Wagner become those of all intelligent lovers of the great art of music, or will it be found necessary to make some modifications before the solution of the operatic problem is reached? The history of intellectual development teaches us in no doubtful manner that there is no permanent rest in art. There must be progress or retrogression. It is, therefore, painful to note the determined efforts of partisans to convince us that in Wagner we have reached the climax of dramatic music. It is impossible to believe that with the human mind on the threshold of greater advances in learning than were ever before made, the arts must fail. That there will be periods of depression none can doubt. There was a long interval between the artists of ancient Rome and those of mediæval Italy. The second Shakespeare has not yet arisen. But music is the youngest of the arts. Her future is still before her, and Wagner has only cleared the path for others who shall come after him. All nations which have produced a school of composers have had opera given in their own language.

Italian opera originally held the stage in Germany, but was superseded by German opera when the popular demand for operas in the language of the people became irresistible. When the two English-speaking nations of the world, England and the United States, demand opera in their own tongue, then we may look forward to the rise of native schools of operatic composers. What kind of opera shall we have when that time comes?

It seems to me that the outcome of the present unsettled condition of dramatic music will be this: We shall adopt Wagner's theories, but shall in some details modify his practice.

Richard Wagner, it seems to me, possessed the greatest genius that ever sought expression through music. Before proceeding further let us refresh our memories as to the meaning of his teachings. Briefly, then, he held that opera music should be illustrative. The composition of a taking air without consideration of its fitness for the dramatic situation, or the puerile attempt at the expression of a great grief through a penny ballad, such as Edgardo sings in his final agony, aroused in Wagner a virtuous indignation. He saw that dramatic power could not be attained by the formal methods, and he wiped them out. His operas contain no set arias,

duets, or trios, strung like occasional pearls on a thread of recitative. Instead of this he declares that we must have the true musical dialogue, with a meaning in every phrase, while for the old cut-and-dried forms he substitutes a continuous flow of melody, which swells to harmonious thunder in passionate moments and again sinks to the whisper of a sigh. And to this he has added the *leit motif*, which is designed to express the particular mood of the moment or to indicate the predominance in the dramatic action of a certain personality. The libretto he has transformed into a living dramatic poem, and from it the music takes its color; to it the music is wholly subservient. The voices must sing phrases that fit the words they utter; the orchestra must paint the progress of the drama in tone pictures.

It is not probable that any advanced musical thinker will contend that these reforms are not good. Yet there are many persons, either indolent by nature or ignorant of the meaning of music, who bewail the decay of the old forms of opera; and who sigh for a rejuvenation of the arid spaces of meaningless *recitativo*, without feeling or life, followed by the aria with its inevitable *cabaletta*. Such persons are not the friends of progress in art, and if they could re-

turn to the days of Caffarelli and Farinelli, they would probably see nothing degrading in the means by which such voices as theirs were made possible. Those who, on the other hand, accept with joy the new dispensation, will bear with me if I seem to occupy needless time in emphasizing Wagner's excellences.

First and foremost is his uncompromising belief that the music should illustrate the text. The truth of his position is so obvious that we are led into wondering why no one thought of it before, forgetting that several good composers did so. But their efforts were futile against the astonishing virtuosity displayed by the accomplished singers of their time, and great virtuosity has always been a stumbling-block in the path of good music. The world hungered for sensations in those days quite as much as it does now, and it preferred to be astounded by the facility of execution possessed by a singer, rather than exalted by pure and lofty melody, simple and severe of form as a Greek statue. Fortunately for the future of music, Wagner's works were a sensation in themselves, and whenever and wherever produced have caused such a bitter opposition on the one hand and such a blind partisanship on the other that they have arrested the attention of the world. Wagner has de-

clared that if works dramatic in form are to be included in music, the meaning of the dramatic action must be expressed. He has declared that the movement of the play must not be stopped while the heroine sang an aria, but that she must sing with precisely the same intent as she would speak in the drama of the theatre. Wagner's position is uncontestedly right. Without dramatic significance the music of the opera has no right to exist. Furthermore, it is impossible to achieve the highest dramatic significance by means of the old set forms. The instrumental prelude to an aria is in itself a destructive interruption to the flow of dramatic feeling. When the recitative ends and the orchestra plays the introductory measures prefatory to the soprano's solo, the hearer cannot avoid thinking, "Now she is going to sing." What went before was only meant to fill up the spaces between the songs. If during its progress the hearer became unconsciously interested in the action, he was recalled to his senses by the orchestral announcement of the melody of the forthcoming song, and he settled himself to hear an exhibition of vocal accomplishments, after which the drama would begin again. Wagner abolished that. He said, in effect : "Where Shakespeare would have written a long speech for an actor or ac-

tress, there let us have long musical speeches, but not in any set form. Let the musical speech flow with the dramatic feeling, and when the end is reached, let the next character go on. Do not let us feel obliged to suspend the animation of the orchestra while the prima donna introduces a cadenza unto her own glory, and above all, do not let us be compelled to follow the style of the seventeenth century and write arias consisting of one slow movement, then a lively movement, and a final return to the original melody without rhyme or reason." And so now, instead of arias we have soliloquies ; and we have no duets or quartets except in situations where it is thoroughly natural that two or four persons should speak at once. This is the true use of the duet, trio, or quartet. As for the chorus, in Wagner's hands it has become an essential part of the life and movement of the music-drama, not a mere background of harmony for concerted pieces. The difference between the chorus of an old-fashioned Italian opera and that of a Wagner music-drama is as great as the difference between the supernumeraries of the legitimate drama in the palmy days of the Bowery and those of the Meiningen Court company or Mr. Henry Irving's organization of players. Significance, significance—always sig-

nificance—proclaims Wagner; let us have nothing without a meaning.

So, too, he treats the scenic attire of his operas with an intelligent purpose. The mood of the scene-painting must be in keeping with the temper of the events. The arena must be meet for the gladiators. Not only must we have realism, but, when useful, supernaturalism. The pale blue light follows Wotan, and the thunder echoes to the clang of his spear. Erda rises like a ghost from the secret places of the earth, and the flames burn with living fury around the resting-place of the Valkyr. All the resources of the stage are called into play to impress the actuality of the drama upon the audience. The imagination must be assisted as far as possible in its realization of the events. There is no room for cheap stage setting and ill contrived costumes, such as are cheerfully tolerated by the admirers of great Italian singers. We go to hear Patti, or Nilsson, or Sembrich; not "Traviata," or "Trovatore," or "Semiramide." Hence we care nothing for the surroundings so long as the diva and the tenor are in good voice. But we do not go to hear Materna or Vogel; we go to hear "Die Walküre" or "Siegfried." It is in keeping with the Wagner spirit that the advertisements of many German opera-houses

do not announce the names of the singers. "The play's the thing." This being the case, every resource of theatrical art must be employed to make the drama realistic and impressive.

Wagner has revolutionized one other department of the operatic performance. In his hands the orchestra became a new power, and no man can ever again write an operatic score as if Wagner had never lived. I think the time has come when one may say, without being accused of premature judgment, that he was the greatest master of score that ever existed. This may be said in spite of the fact that familiarity with Beethoven's splendid achievements with the conventional list of instruments, and Berlioz's audacious treatment of orchestral effects, impels us to be cautious in our statements. Wagner has used every instrument that has any value in the orchestra. I have only to remind musicians of his masterly handling of the bass clarinet, raising it from a position of obscurity to one of the highest importance in the wood wind. The English horn is used delightfully by Wagner, and indeed I know of no composer who has made the entire wind band speak in more poetic accents. Not even Weber wrote so admirably for the horn, and as for the cornets and trombones, no one ever made such bold and imposing

use of them as Wagner. With all this he has clung tenaciously to the great principle of orchestration—good writing for the strings. He has retained for them their position as the base of all good instrumentation, and he has woven their voices together in a close and solid texture of sound that for richness, sonority, and expressiveness has certainly never been surpassed, and, I think, never equalled. In combinations Wagner has been ingenious and always judicious. His enchanting use of four solo violins and three flutes, the former soaring among the highest harmonic tones, in the prelude to "Lohengrin," was new, daring, and conspicuously successful.

A hundred other instances of his readiness in conception and bravery in execution might be cited; but the technical aspect of his instrumentation, masterly as it is, does not constitute the revolution in his scoring. He has raised the orchestra from the position of a mere accompanist to that of a leading character in the drama. With him it has become not only an illustrator but an expicator of the drama. The score is symphonic in its scope. It is independent of the voices, and yet superlatively sympathetic with them. Its phrases reflect the passions and the personality of the actors in the drama. It is continually telling the story in

tone-poems of surpassing beauty, dignity, and power. It is the singer of singers, gifted with a hundred voices, possessed of every shade of feeling, from light laughter to the deepest and most tragic gloom, endowed with a variety of tone-color beyond the limits of the human throat, and able to move the hearer with the profoundest emotion. If Wagner had done nothing else, his revelation of the possibilities of the orchestra in opera would entitle him to the honor of being called an epoch-maker.

These changes of Wagner's constitute the most important reformation in the history of opera, and perhaps in that of all music. As one of his warmest admirers said in an excellent article in *Scribner's Magazine*, "the leading principle of the Wagnerian music-drama is briefly this: That the text—what in old-fashioned dialect was called the libretto—once written by the poet, all other persons who have to do with the work—composer, stage-architect, scene-painter, costumer, stage-manager, conductor, and singing actors—should aim at one thing only: the most exact, perfect, and life-like expression and embodiment of the poet's thought." I take it that few persons of serious culture will dissent from this proposition; and most of them will admit that through it oper-

atic music has been raised to a higher level. This is one of the positions which the extreme Italianists hotly contest. They say that in their good old style of opera the music was everything, and the libretto a secondary matter. But in devoting music to the service of the poet Wagner elevated it to a higher place than it held before. He gave it purpose, significance, coherency, vitality. He added to its simple appeal to the ear a vigorous claim upon the intellect, while his opponents in making music everything made it nothing ; in denying to it intelligibility they caused it to be but sounding brass and tinkling cymbals.

But there are two sides to every question. The fact stares us in the face that many persons are obliged to acquire a taste for Wagner. Some who have listened half a lifetime with loving attention to the works of Bach, Händel, Mozart, Beethoven, Mendelssohn, and Schumann, recoil at a first hearing from much of Wagner's music ; while on the other hand some of the well-saturated Wagnerites, though cautious in their writings, are in the habit of smiling in private life at "Don Giovanni" and the ninth symphony. It is the misfortune not only of Wagner, but of all music, that the clamorous folly of self-styled conservatives, vainly endeavoring to keep alive

the exploded traditions of an effete school, have aroused in behalf of the great German master a blatant partisanship which has done more than anything else to retard a general acceptance of his system. The ultra-Wagnerite holds not only that no other composer wrote operas with an artistic aim, but that no kind of operatic music save Wagner's has any claim to critical consideration. Bigotry and intolerance have never helped any cause, and they will not aid that of musico-dramatic reform. It is not uncommon for reformers to rush to extremes, and the results of all sweeping revolutions are modified by the subsequent reflection of calmer and more controlled moods.

“Rectius vives, Licini, neque altum
Semper urgendo neque, dum procellas
Cantus horrescis, nimium promendo
Litus iniquum.”

So wrote Horace, who was a man of the world. The golden mean is worth remembering, even in musical controversies. I said earlier in this article that the world would probably adopt Wagner's theories, but modify some details of his practice. I am now to explain what I mean by modifying his practice. Mr. H. E. Krehbiel, who stands at the head of musical

criticism in America, and whose opinions command the respectful consideration of leading commentators in Europe, said, in his masterly reviews of "Tristan und Isolde": "We know that the score is a perfect and complete exposition of Wagner's theories." He holds this ground in spite of the admission of Wagner that he went far beyond his theories in the composition of this music-drama; and a study of the work justifies the critic in his position. But notwithstanding the warm reception which this work had in New York, I am compelled by personal inquiry and observation to believe that it met, at first, with limited favor outside of the circle of enthusiastic Germanists and tried admirers of Wagner. Now, is the world at large prepared to surrender to a select few the only true and artistic form of opera? The opera, like the drama, is for the edification of all persons of general culture. Are they prepared to admit that they prefer an inartistic kind of opera, while the true form is reserved for those who are willing to devote the necessary amount of study to the new ideas? It seems to me that this cannot be. As soon as the opera becomes the exclusive privilege of a few enthusiastic disciples of a severe school, and the mass of people seek some other form of musical delight, the opera will de-

cline. Let us endeavor to see what it is that especially militates against the progress of the Wagner works in popularity among lovers of the older styles of opera.

The greatest obstacle to the success of the theories of Wagner, it seems, is that his musical expression of them is so frequently offensive to the ear. His disciples admit that it is not pleasant at times to the untrained hearer; but they hold that this should not be accounted to Wagner's blame so long as dramatic significance is preserved. But music must please the ear; that is a very important part of its business. The palate declines to accept as a delight the bitter draught given to strengthen the body. The physician is compelled to smother his potion in syrup before it will go down. Or, to make the analogy more apt, we do not eat food that displeases us simply because it sustains life, for we can get agreeable victuals that will answer our purpose. In music, at the present time, we are somewhat limited in agreeable food, but the future will probably provide us with an abundance of pabulum agreeable to the taste and thoroughly wholesome.

Wagner's practice, when carried to its extreme limits, as in "*Tristan und Isolde*," results in some pages of score devoid of what the ear recognizes

as melody.* I do not here use this term as synonymous with tune or air. A simple theme of eight or ten notes may be a melody, and many of Wagner's *leit motifs* are melodies of this class. Others are not melodies at all, but simply disagreeable sequences of notes, such as Gluck, Bach, Händel, Mozart, and Beethoven would never have dreamed of employing as themes. We must have progress in art, to be sure; and as Beethoven made melodies and harmonies far beyond the dreams of Palestrina, so the composer of the future will probably find combinations which never occurred to Beethoven. The authority of the classic writers cannot forbid novelty. Nor can the authority of a reformer, no matter how great, compel the acceptance of that portion of his work which offends the general taste of civilized persons. "The evil that men do lives after them; the good is oft interred with their bones." So let it not be with Wagner.

* "'Melody' is the amateur's war-cry, and certainly music without melody is no music," says Schumann. "Therefore you must understand what amateurs fancy the word means; anything easily, rhythmically pleasing. But there are melodies of a very different stamp, and every time you open Bach, Beethoven, Mozart, etc., they will smile out at you in a thousand different ways; you will soon weary, if you know these, of the faded monotony of modern Italian opera melodies."

It is impossible to consider this matter of melody without taking harmony into account. Only barbaric peoples produce purely homophonic music, and even in their melodies we meet with successions of notes which look so much like analyses of chords that we are compelled to believe that they have an instinct for the simpler harmonies. Our own melody is, as an excellent writer has said, "almost invariably either actually derived from, or representative of, harmony, and is dependent for a great deal of its effect thereupon." This is particularly true in the case of Wagner, and it becomes necessary for us to inquire whether any good and symmetrical melody can possibly be founded on a harmony which is often a protracted succession of abrupt and strained modulations. It pleases me to refer to Berlioz, who is often accused of harshness. He calls attention to the fact that in early days music consisted of a series of consonant harmonies, mingled with a few discords of suspension; and he is amused at the outcry raised against Claudio Monteverde when he attempted to follow the dominant with the chord of the seventh without preparation. As soon, however, as this innovation was accepted, the authorities rushed to the other extreme and held in contempt all compositions whose har-

mony was simple. "These musicians," says Berlioz, "took a fancy for dissonant chords, as certain animals have a predilection for salt, prickly plants, and thorny shrubs." The extremists naturally produced a reaction, and it was not long before the world recognized the existence of a school of fanatical melodists, who went into convulsions at the sight of a composition in more than three parts. Others denounced harmony as a barbarous invention. This school was followed by the unshackled modulators, who did away with the old restrictions requiring modulation only into relative keys. Then grew up a new form of extravagance, and in the smallest compositions the writers careered all over the kingdom of music from C major to F-sharp minor and back again. Wagner revived the failing glories of this class of work, and some passages in his music-dramas impress us with the idea that he was vainly searching for an impossible key in which he might tarry for a moment. Dissonance is followed by dissonance, and the composer seems to aim at conveying to the mind the impression of emotional struggles by means of agglomerations of sounds which are in the highest degree offensive to the ear. I mean by this the cultivated musical ear which has not been nurtured

exclusively on Wagner. One can cultivate, in eating, a taste for salads and spiced dishes that will make roast beef and baked potatoes seem uninviting food ; but the latter are not less desirable on that account. So one can learn to like those portions of Wagner's works which are filled with constant discord and harsh progressions, and the result frequently is that at the same time he learns to dislike the suave dignity of Beethoven and Mozart, and to simply despise the unaffected tunefulness of Haydn and Mendelssohn. And yet to-day, if you ask any authority in music what methods are permissible in composition, he will repeat to you the dictum of Berlioz, that whatsoever produces a good effect is good, and whatsoever makes a bad effect is bad. Few, very few, deny that as absolute music many of Wagner's effects are bad ; but we are called upon to note how admirably they illustrate the meaning of the text. Let us hasten to admit that they do illustrate the meaning. There can be no question about that ; but could not melodic phrases, agreeable to the ear, be invented which would perform the same office ? Gluck achieved this end ; so did Beethoven, and so, in some instances, has Verdi. They did not find it necessary to make constant use of what are known as false relations in

their music. When they have introduced unpleasant successions of notes in their melodies the series is always very brief, and is employed manifestly for the purpose of contrast. On the other hand, they have subtended the smoothest and most beautiful melodies with a rich and complex harmony which dignifies them and inexpressibly heightens their effectiveness. And it is to be noted that their melodies, together with the harmonic treatment, move symmetrically and show a tendency to return to the key in which they started ; whereas Wagner's melodies, through the continual modulation of his harmony, the frequency of his dissonances, and the extraordinary character of his resolutions, impress the ear as tending generally to break into foreign keys. The inevitable result of this frequent uncertain suspension of the melody is chaotic, and its final issue is musical formlessness. Music wholly without form is intolerable. The greatest composers before Wagner's day insisted on it, and the very critics who now regard Wagner as a model for musicians do not hesitate to condemn other writers for lack of attention to this matter. Schumann, one of the keenest and wisest of critics, as well as one of the best of composers, said : "The history of all arts and artists has proven that mastery of form leads

talent to continually increasing freedom." It is hardly necessary to say that by musical form I am not referring to the formulas of the old-school opera. I do not mean the aria, or the arioso, or the ritornello, or the cabaletta. I am speaking now of symmetrical musical phrases, of complete musical sentences, of melodic paragraphs, constructed with as much skill and grace as the rounded periods of Macaulay or Addison. Wagner is often a musical Carlyle, rough and uncouth in style, but powerful in matter. As Carlyle's strong unpolished works are unquestionably a more noble gift to the world than Addison's finished writings, so Wagner's music-dramas are unquestionably more valuable than the honey-flowing operas of Bellini and Donizetti. But as no instructor in rhetoric would dream of giving his pupils Carlyle as a model of style, so I cannot, for the life of me, see how musical critics can hold that Wagner's manner should be the model of the future. The old school went to one extreme; Wagner has gone to the other. If music is to cater only to the ear, it is no higher art than good cooking; if it is to administer solely to the reason, it is no art at all, but an abstract science. All arts appeal first to the senses. No school of painting could gain public approval which offended the eye

with bad drawing and coloring, no matter how great the thought contained in the pictures. No poetry which offends the ear by a lack of rhythm will ever be approved by literary taste. Nor will the vast body of music lovers throughout the world ever be induced to accept as music successions of notes which the ear declines to recognize as melodic.

I have already intimated a belief that these unmelodious phrases are not necessary to dramatic significance. Yet that is the ground on which they are defended. Now, on the other hand, it seems to me that the most dramatic passages in all music are emphatically agreeable to the ear, and that by their elevating influence through the sense of hearing they lift the soul to new and nobler heights. In Beethoven's "Fidelio" the grand air known as the "Abscheulicher" is surcharged with dramatic power, and yet is a perfect mine of melody. The famous Leonore overture, No. III., though played between the acts of the opera, is as much dramatic music as if it were fitted to words, and of its sensuous beauty there can be no question whatever. Again, the grave-digging scene in this opera is superb in its dramatic intensity, and yet Leonore does not utter a solitary phrase that is not beautiful and symmetrical. The works of

Weber and Mozart are mines of melodious dramatic writing. But to depart from the field of German opera, let the reader ask himself whether "Carmen" is lacking in dramatic power, and whether it is not musically beautiful? One of the most devoted adherents of Wagner said to me once, "Oh, I like 'Carmen'; it is a music-drama." If that is the case, if it is possible to write a work which Wagnerites regard as a music-drama, and to fill it with music admired by all intelligent persons, how is it necessary to produce such quantities of soul-trying cacophony in order to attain dramatic significance? Is "Aida" a dramatic work? The same advanced Wagnerite who praised "Carmen" told me he admired "Aida" and deemed it a noble opera. But is it not one of the most melodious operas ever written? It is, indeed, replete with melody of the very loftiest character, and harmony of the richest and most varied nature. And yet nowhere has Verdi found it impossible to attain significance and to arouse the proper feelings in his hearers through the medium of agreeable music.

But Wagner himself has proven the case for us. In his own mighty works are to be found the strongest arguments against the apologies of his partisans, for he himself has treated the most

powerful dramatic passages in his music-dramas with the most sublimely beautiful melodies. "Lohengrin" long ago found its way to the hearts of the people through its entrancing beauty. One of the most dramatic scenes in all music is the arrival of *Lohengrin*, yet every measure in the passages leading up to it, in the scene itself, in the stirring *ensemble* which succeeds it, is built of pure and flowing themes. The duo between *Telramund* and *Ortrud*, at the beginning of the second act of the same work, is an example of Wagner's extreme unpleasantness. There is a fine fervor and intensity in the episode, but it is so full of discord and harsh progressions that the hearer can find merit in it only by a close study of its ingenuity of construction. In "Tannhäuser," again, the master has shown that he can write dramatically and melodiously at one and the same time. There is no more touching episode in the work than *Tannhäuser's* reception by his friends on his return to the Castle, and yet it reaches its climax in the beautiful solo and septet descriptive of *Elizabeth's* love. In the second act the splendid contrast between the song of *Wolfram* and that of *Tannhäuser* produces a powerful dramatic effect, and yet both are pure melody. And at the climax of the opera we hear the full power of the pilgrims'

chorus, one of the broadest, most dignified, and superb melodies ever written. "Siegfried" is full of tunefulness, and yet contains abundant cacophony. Nearly all of the opening scene between *Siegfried* and *Mime* is unnecessarily repulsive to the ear, and some of the passages in the scene between *Mime* and *Wotan* are dreadful ordeals. Yet when he comes to *Wotan's* speech about the dwellers in Walhalla the master arises to the loftiest kind of dramatic dignity in a rarely melodious passage. Again melody and strongly marked rhythm, and, moreover, a rounded, well-conceived form, are the striking features of the forging of the sword. The second act is largely tuneful, and its largest wealth of melody is in the climax of the act. And the greatest scene of the opera is the marvellous duet between *Siegfried* and *Brünnhilde*, at the end of the last act, a duet unsurpassed by any other ever written, except perhaps that between *Siegmund* and *Sieglinde* in "Die Walküre." And what has Wagner done that exceeds in power the death of *Siegfried* in "Die Götterdämmerung," the sublimest musical scene ever conceived by the mind of man? Is it not the very apotheosis of lofty melody? And so it is throughout Wagner's works. Whenever he is writing long passages of harsh, cacophonous progressions—in a

word, rough and uncouth Carlyle prose—he is disagreeable and repellent; but when he rises with the emotions of the scene and interprets in music the grandest episodes in his librettos, then he speaks perforce in true melody and becomes fired with the vital and imperishable flame of a real tone-poet. It seems to me that any person who studies the music-dramas of the German master with an unprejudiced mind will admit that he attains the greatest dramatic effect just at the places where he achieves the most striking beauty of composition. I am not aware that Wagner ever announced a belief that disagreeable music was good. The proclamation of the extreme Wagnerites that their king can do no wrong is probably due to a fear that to admit the uncouth ugliness of certain passages of the new music would be to strengthen the position of the Italianissimi, who hold that "Caro nome" and "Bel raggio" and "Si la stanchezza" are the only kind of airs suitable for human ears. The extreme right need have no fear, since Verdi, the divinity of the extreme left, has in his old age cast confusion into the camps of both parties with "Aida" and "Otello." The iron heel of progress has trodden out of sight the little wormlets of music, which, though crushed, still wriggle at

the tail. But the world has not abandoned melody altogether.

The world, moreover, is not prepared to part with the art of singing. If, however, the harsh and strained parts of Wagner's music-dramas are to be accepted as a model for the operatic composers of the future, the art of song will disappear, for this kind of music is almost unsingable. The intervals are of such a nature that the vocal organs do not readily pass from one note to the other. The sequence of tones is not only strained and unnatural for the ear, but equally so for the voice. The result of this is an extraordinary wear on the powers, and when to this harsh progression of tones are added the difficulties of producing the voice under the limitations of the German tongue, the obstacles in the path of the singer become formidable. The Italian language is peculiarly adapted to the art of singing. In the development of this "soft, bastard Latin" every hard sound was dropped, and the language purified in its vocalism to a degree of unequalled smoothness. It is the pre-eminently liquid tongue, and its vowel-sounds are the simple elementary tones of human speech. On the other hand, German has a number of mixed tones, such as those represented by the modified vowels ü and ö, which are extremely difficult to

sing except on notes easily produced. Like the highest notes of the clarinet, horn, and trumpet, they are hazardous unless reached by a judiciously contrived preparatory progression. The best German singers mar their work by the bad production of notes accompanied by these vowel sounds, while singers of fairly good ability frequently shock the ears of cultured hearers.

Now, since this is the case in average music, it must obviously be worse in the Wagner music-dramas, because the great German, as is well known, did not give sufficient attention to the powers of the human voice. His demands on it often exceed reason, and there is no vocal work more exacting than the singing of his operas. The absence for long spaces in his scores of anything resembling fluent melody is destructive of proper voice-production. In the great singing-schools of Italy, in the elder and better days of vocal art, what the French call *la mise de voix*, or, as we roughly term it, delivery, was a study of years. As we have seen, Porpora kept Caffarelli at it for six years, and then dismissed him with these words: "Go, my son; you have nothing more to learn; you are the first singer of Italy and the world." And this was the truth.

Delivery consists, according to a respectable

authority, "in adapting as perfectly as possible the motions of respiration to the emission of sound, so as to bring out the power of the latter, as much as the quality of the organ and the conformation of the chest will admit, without carrying it to that degree of effort which makes the sound degenerate into a cry." No singer needs to be told that these results cannot be accomplished in the singing of music constructed with little or no attention to the capabilities of vocal organs. Wagner wrote with a view only to the expression of his ideas, and he rarely troubled himself about the ability of singers to cope with the difficulties of his score. The consequence has been that vocalists engaged in the interpretation of his works have been continually obliged to sin against the laws of good voice production that only persons of unusual robustness, such as Materna, Winkelmann, Scaria, or Lehmann, have been able to remain before the public for any length of time as representatives of his characters. And very few of these people have achieved great distinction except in the German mind, as vocalists pure and simple. They are singing actors, and the extreme Wagnerites hold that in the future the singing actor must be the artist of the operatic stage. The drama being the most important

part of the whole, the acting necessary for its interpretation must rise above the singing. But if we had a school of composition in which the music, written so as faithfully to illustrate the truly dramatic book, should be couched in terms of fluent melody and constructed with a view to good vocal results, the kind of artist needed for the operatic stage would not be a singing actor but an acting singer. The singing actor is a new species of performer, called into existence by the exigencies of an extreme school.

As I said before, the world is probably not prepared to give up the art of finished singing. Since the days of Claudio Monteverde the opera has been the conservatory in which blossomed the rarest flowers of song. Once let the stage lose its culture, and perfect vocalization must disappear from the world. The concert-singer and the amateur are not influential enough to counterbalance the authority of the opera. The art of vocalization will be lost, and we shall read of the marvellous powers of the singers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries with scepticism. Farinelli curing Philip V., of Spain, of an attack of melancholy which threatened his reason, Raff bringing the salvation of tears to the grief-stunned Princess Belmont, Senesino forgetting his part and falling upon the neck of

Farinelli after an aria, Crescentini melting Napoleon and his whole court to tears—all these things will become the incredible legends of a musical age of fable ; and we shall be compelled to endure at all times, as we frequently are now, bad voice-production, harsh and unmusical declamation, and strident cries, for the sake of a particularly good facial expression and a fine dignity of movement.

Why should we, when we can go to the theatre and witness the finest exhibitions of dramatic art unmarred by badly sung music ? The music-drama or opera either is an art-form or it is not. If it is, the quality which differentiates it from other forms of art is its employment of music, vocal and instrumental, as a means of expression. If it is an art-form, there can be no logical ground for the employment of anything but the best music, both sung and played. The attempt to express dramatic feeling and to arouse corresponding emotion in the auditor through music is capable of attaining the highest results. But if the singing is not to be of the best, why have any at all ? It would be better, as has been suggested, to perform a pantomime on the stage and let the orchestra accompany it with an illustrative symphony than to enact a musical drama in which the oral part

is hazardous for voices and exasperating to ears. To say that we must sacrifice the old-fashioned art of song to the demands of the drama is but another way of declaring that the opera is not a true art-form, but an intolerable hybrid; and the logical outcome of such a course of reasoning is obviously that we should go to the theatre in order to see a coherent and logical form of drama, and should not encourage such an absurdity as opera, in which we are promised a drama expressed through music, with an important part of the music spoiled for the purpose.

The *leit motif* has so much in its favor that one hesitates to advance the opinion that either Wagner or his commentators — I do not know which — have carried its employment to an absurd extreme. The use of certain musical phrases to indicate the entrance of characters in an opera, or the recurrence of an emotion, was not new with Wagner; but he was the first who went to the extent of giving us musical fragments for the expression of every little thing in the work. We have not only such motives as those of the Rhine, of Walhalla, *Loge*, and *Siegfried*, which will become not only familiar but intelligible to a frequent hearer of the music-dramas, but we have also such motives as those of the Niebelungs' servitude and the gods'

stress, which no number of hearings will reveal to the hearer. No one ever attended a Wagner music-drama often enough to be able to say "That is the rainbow motive; now we hear the motive of love's greeting, now that of love's passion, now that of love's peace." The only manner in which the average lover of opera can find out what the motives mean is to read some one of the handbooks in which Wagner's partisans have taken the trouble to explain these themes. The objection which I make to them, therefore, is that of themselves they do not, with a few striking exceptions, make their own meaning clear to the auditor. They are, therefore, not fairly significant. They are vague and unsatisfactory. They are the result of an attempt to give to music a definiteness of expression which is foreign to its nature. And a thorough understanding of their meaning requires of the hearer a considerable amount of preparatory study and research.

I must confess that I like the use of certain melodies for the accompaniment of certain emotions. The laws of association will so operate in the mind at each joint recurrence of a clear, distinguishable theme, and a dramatic movement or mood which it accompanied before, that the influence of the composer upon the

hearer will be largely increased. But when a score is almost wholly made up of motives which can only be remembered by laborious effort, and which do not convey of themselves a distinct significance, the freedom of the composer is sacrificed to a useless artificiality. The fact that Wagner's music is so often strongly dramatic is not due to the interweaving of the motives, but to the general effect on the hearer, which would be accomplished as easily by music freely written without being constructed almost wholly of *leit motifs*. If one complains that he does not see much beauty in "Tristan und Isolde," the extreme Wagnerites will tell him that it is because he has not studied the score and discerned the marvellous ingenuity with which it is constructed from the proper *leit motifs*. But it is necessary for the average hearer to have the significance of each theme designated, after much study, by a learned Wagnerian commentator, because the phrases do not sufficiently speak for themselves. And unless the text of the libretto is so clearly illustrated by the music that the design of the latter is at once manifest, it is obvious that true dramatic significance has not been attained in the score.

Now what will the opera of our future be? We do not want opera without melodious sing-

ing, and we will not have that which is mellifluous jingle without soul. Transfusion of blood must take place somewhere, for it is not possible that either German or Italian opera will retain its present constitution unchanged. The laws of evolution indicate our choice. The fittest must survive, and that is the music-drama of Wagner. But in our progress let us add to it the unfailing vocal melody of Mozart and Gluck, and the skill of Italy in training voices and in writing for them. Let us admit nothing from any source which is not in the highest sense dramatic. The set forms and surprising *fiorituri* of the Italian stage are dead; and they ought to be, for they have no place in dramatic expression. But what the Wagner theories need, in order to make them the true foundation of the opera of the future, is a greater proportion in the voice-parts of fluent melody and polished vocal art.

The partisans of Wagner will oppose the adoption of anything from the Italian school. It is the custom of too many Germans to sneer at the products of the Italian mind. The German intellect is metaphysical; the Italian æsthetic. The reasoning faculties are developed beyond all the powers of the soul in the German. In the Italian spirit the emotions are the

foremost moving powers. The iron ice of intellect confines and chills the waters of feeling in the north. The reason is but a thin crust over the lava of passion in the south. "Two special powers lead mankind—impulse and idea," says M. Taine. Impulse prevails with the Italian; idea with the German. For this reason the latter believes himself superior to the former. Mind always feels its superiority to matter; and the fierce emotions which find expression in the violent affections of the body, in the blazing eye and quivering lip, seem to the austere and self-contained thinker materialistic. And the German, looking upon the Italian as a creature of impulses which break down the barriers of reason and defile the holy chastity of logic, regards him as something a little lower than a true man, as a wayward child—a child of nature, if you will—but still a child, more pleased with pretty toys than absorbed in the serious aspects of life.

But it is just this quality of impulsiveness in the Italian, this filial allegiance to the great mother Nature, which makes his place in the realm of art important. He cares less for logic than for beauty. He works, perhaps, by divine intuition rather than by consummate reasoning; but in art, strokes of genius are the blows that move the world. Italy never produced a Kant,

with his exhaustive exposition of the reason ; a Leibnitz, with his beautiful, but unsubstantial theory of monads ; or a Hegel, with his divine mysticism. But, on the other hand, Germany never gave birth to a Rafael, a Michael Angelo, a Leonardo da Vinci, a Correggio, or a Titian. Germany had her Goethe and her Schiller, but Italy had her Dante and her Petrarch. And behind Italian poetry and art rise the majestic shadows of Virgil and Cicero gliding through the streets of the seven-hilled city, within whose walls were crowded more glories of art and architecture than the whole civilized world has been able to produce since Alaric swept down upon it all out of the north with fire and the sword.

Italy is pre-eminently an art nation. Beauty has been her religion. The Creator made her very beautiful among the lands of the earth, and her sons are brought forth with the sweetness and grace of Como and the Arno in their veins. Music was born in Italy. This was the cradle of human song, as we know it to-day. The modern world's nursery ditties were sung here. It is a bold assertion to say that Italian art is dead. It may be dead in Italy, but it lives in the rest of the civilized world. It is equal folly to hold that Italian music has ceased to live. Upon the

ancient methods of poetry and painting the impress of modern ideas has been stamped. We no longer paint bunches of grapes so faithfully as to deceive the birds. We lavish the perfection of technique on the expression of great thoughts or the lofty moods of nature. In poetry we have advanced from the "drum and trumpet chronicles" of a Homer to the mighty soul-pictures of a Shakespeare. All that was good in the old forms of Greece and Rome has been saved and utilized. Who shall say that a like assimilation shall not be the outcome of the present musical upheaval?

To me this seems the inevitable result—that music shall become a combination of the Italian wealth of vocal melody with the German intellectuality, symmetry, and logic of form and development. Verdi has shown a tendency in this direction in the works of his old age. But neither "Aida" nor "Otello" has gone far enough. The drama is too often sacrificed to musical requirements which are relics of the older school. Verdi has not had the courage of his convictions, or else he has been laboring under the delusion that he could preserve many features of the old style which have only tradition to recommend them. In the four dramas of the *Niebelungen* cyclus, in "Tann-

häuser" and especially in "Die Meistersinger," Richard Wagner, to my mind the greatest musical genius who ever lived, has approached the happy medium; but he has come from the other side. He errs in seeing too little merit in the old manner. "It requires much time to discover musical Mediterraneans," says Berlioz, "and still more to master their navigation." When a composer arises who will know how to superimpose upon the anatomy of the Wagner music-drama the fair exterior of a finished vocal art, we shall have a form of opera in which ideal beauty shall go hand in hand with consummate significance.





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